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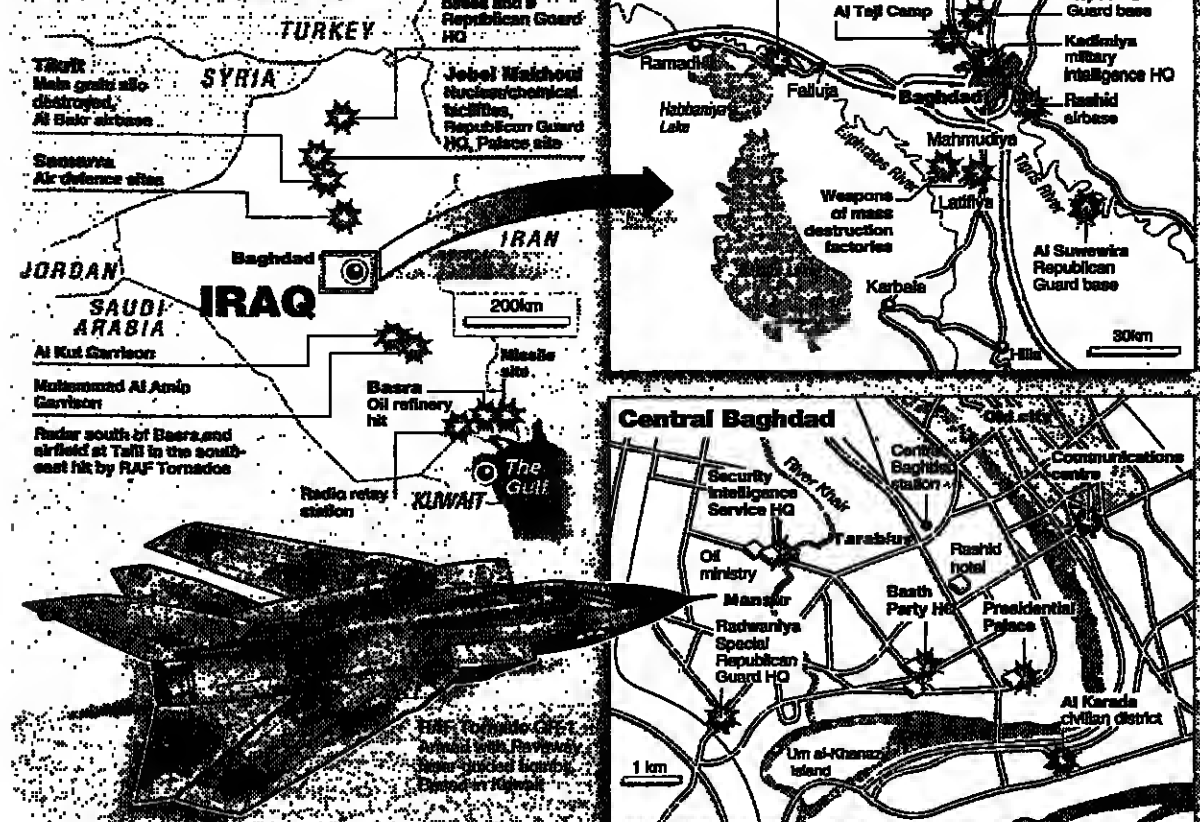
Iraq: After the missiles

The international determination to keep Saddam 'in his cage' is looking shakier than ever



What was hit

Results of the US and British air strikes



The claims

- The cost of the cruise missile strikes was \$137m
- The cost of the Tornado strikes was \$25m
- The cost of the Tornado strikes was \$25m
- The cost of the Tornado strikes was \$25m



A Tornado pilot displays the campaign's fox insignia. Yesterday pilots felt relief that it was over. PHOTOGRAPH: STEPHANIE MAGEE

Caged, but for how long?

GOALS: The US and Britain claimed success, but questions remain about how to 'contain' Saddam and how much he is damaged, writes Ian Black

AS Britain and America claimed success for the military goals of Operation Desert Fox yesterday and set out a new strategy of "containment" for Iraq, many tough questions remained unanswered. The first is how will Saddam Hussein still alive and as vocal as ever, be contained? There are echoes here of earlier attempts at containment — it has, after all, been the declared goal of the US and Britain since the Gulf war ended inconclusively in March 1991 with the liberation of Kuwait but with the Iraqi dictator, shaken by bloody rebellions of Kurds and Shi'ites, still in power.

The key differences now are that the inspectors of the United Nations Special Commission (Unscm) — condemned spies by Baghdad — are highly unlikely to go back; and that international determination to keep Saddam "in his cage" is looking shakier than ever before. New means will have to be found to monitor what remains of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, though aerial and satellite surveillance is unlikely to be more effective than an on-the-ground hunt for incriminating procurement documents and easily concealed flasks of germ warfare agents. How extensively Saddam's regime and capabilities have been damaged is another important question: even extensive damage could leave the Iraqi leader able within months — and perhaps weeks — of again threatening his neighbours with chemical and biological weapons. And despite intensive targeting of his elite security units and unconfirmed reports of summary executions of mutinous officers, it does not automatically translate into a significant weakening of what Tony Blair called this "highly centralised and repressive regime". The Anglo-American camp will now have to seek support for maintaining the UN sanctions imposed in 1990. Russia and France, hitherto at not being consulted about Desert Fox and opposed to any military action, have long been working to ease those sanctions and at the very least to show Baghdad "some light at the end of the tunnel". It will clearly not be easy to persuade them to sign up to tighter enforcement. Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president, gave a clear sign of his mood yesterday when he insisted it was "absolutely clear that the use of force has only complicated solving the Iraq problem". And in Paris, Jacques Chirac called for a review of the eight-year oil embargo, which has starved and impoverished millions of ordinary Iraqis while a brutal regime has created off UN-approved sales to live in luxury. Attitudes like these will take some overcoming, as Michael Howard, the shadow

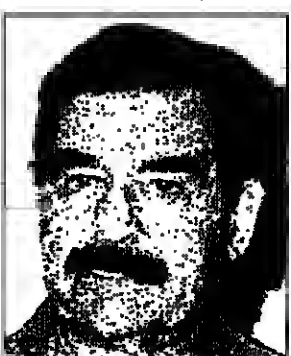
foreign secretary, argued yesterday in responding to Mr Blair's presentation. "He called for a more intensive enforcement of sanctions but how is that any easier today than it was a week ago?" Mr Howard asked. "He spoke of a new diplomatic consensus, but the absence of that consensus over the last few days does not bode well for the future."

Faced with this reality, diplomatic activity will be intense in the coming days. Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, started with a call to "Madeline Albright, his American counterpart — reeling from the Clinton impeachment drama but also claiming success in keeping Saddam 'in his box'". More strikingly, Mr Cook spoke too to Kamal Kharrazi, Iran's foreign minister and chairman of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Iran has spoken out forcefully against unilateral American-British action, but its hostility to Iraq (despite covert cooperation in sanctions-busting) and regional influence could be useful in trying to unite Muslim and Arab states behind containment. Securing agreement for more sales of oil to buy humanitarian supplies and relieve the suffering of the Iraqi people will be a key part of this diplomatic campaign. After angry demonstrations from Morocco to Syria and charges of double standards in the light of renewed stalemate in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, threats of

anti-western terrorist attacks will have to be taken seriously. US and British diplomats say that whatever their public stance, Arab Gulf states privately want a tough policy towards Baghdad. But it seems unlikely that their support will be any more forthcoming if the US and Britain again insist that UN resolutions allow them to attack without warning. Russia's call for a return to the security council suggests a long haul to achieve consensus even among the veto-wielding Big Five after their failure to consult last week following the damning report on Iraqi obstruction by Unscm chief Richard Butler. Yesterday's statements in Washington and London emphasised support for the Iraqi opposition, but in neither capital was there the explicit backing for a long-term, comprehensive strategy of regime destabilisation that exile groups are demanding. Conscripts in the Iraqi army will have noticed that they were not bombed while

Republican Guard units were. But there is no sign that the US and Britain are ready to pay the diplomatic and military price of enforcing a "no-drive" zone that would restrict Iraqi armour to the Baghdad area — and encourage insurrection elsewhere. "There will be a deepening problem in the Arab world if our campaign does not end in a significantly chastened and punished regime in Baghdad," warned Robert Saloth, of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. "We have no doctrine, no ground rules," said security expert Anthony Cordesman. "We have not set out what we're doing beyond degrade, we haven't defined what success is. One of our problems is that we're so self-obsessed that we have not dealt with the rest of the world."

Desert Fox is over, but the story of containing Iraq continues. Whatever else happens in the coming months, it is a fair bet that Saturday night will not be the last time air raid sirens are heard wailing in the streets of Baghdad.



Even extensive damage could leave Saddam able within weeks of threatening his neighbours with chemical weapons

Key questions still unanswered

THE RAIDS: Britain and US hail success, but remain vague about how much damage done to Saddam's war machine, says Richard Norton-Taylor

BRITISH and US officials yesterday hailed four nights of air strikes by more than 400 cruise missiles and 200 bombers on nearly 100 targets as a success, but were vague about the extent of the damage caused by the massive military action. Two key questions about Operation Desert Fox remained last night after a string of ministerial press conferences and interviews: how much damage was done to Saddam's war machine and ability to maintain internal repression, and how quickly can he repair it? William Cohen, the US defence secretary, acknowledged that some of the targets hit could be rebuilt in a year. Pentagon analysts have estimated less than serious damage to about 70 per cent of the 97 targets hit over the four nights of attacks. Tony Blair said yesterday that targets included 27 air defence systems, 20 command, control, and communications centres, 10 bases of the elite Republican Guard, and 90 sites involved in making weapons of mass destruction. They included a facility to build unmanned aircraft

said to be designed for dropping anthrax — what General Sir Charles Guthrie, chief of the defence staff, called "the anthrax air force" and "drones of death". The bombing raids had set back Saddam's capacity to deliver these "terrible weapons" by missile or drones by several years, he said. Sir Charles said it would take Saddam years to "recreate an air defence network" while Mr Blair insisted that the operation had shown the people of Iraq "that we can strike hard against his privileged Republican Guard, key props for his regime and its military capability". Iraq's conscript army, he emphasised, was not targeted. In a reference to the Republican Guard, Mr Blair said Britain and the US had sent "a very strong signal to [Saddam's] top echelons of repression... They now know they are the first in line." A Republican Guard barracks in Tikrit, Saddam's family and clan base 100 miles north of Baghdad, was attacked and a video clip produced by the Ministry of Defence showed RAF Tornados hitting a Republican Guard base in southern Iraq.



'Just as a car is useless with the electronics removed, Iraq's war machine cannot function without a few key elements'
Sir Charles Guthrie (left)

Sir Charles said there was evidence that Saddam had tried to disperse guard detachments "but he miscalculated". He added: "The plan was in effect very simple. Just as a car is made useless with the engine electronics removed, so Saddam's military machine cannot function without a few key elements." A Pentagon photograph showed a Republican Guard barracks in north-west Iraq severely damaged by 500lb bombs from a B-1 bomber. Journalists staying at the Rashid hotel in downtown Baghdad saw missiles hit areas containing headquarters of the special security services and the command centre of the paramilitary Popular Army. They said the headquarters of the Military Industrial Corporation, which runs Iraq's factories, had been gutted. The area around Saddam's biggest palace was hit, but his whereabouts were not known at the time. Other targets they listed included the headquarters of the ruling Baath Party, and al-Mustansiriyah University. Iraqi officials reported damage to what they consider civilian facilities, such as a house belonging to Saddam's daughter Rihana, but reports said the house had been destroyed, but no one was hurt. Officials said many facilities hit were being monitored by UN arms inspectors to prevent renewal of weapons production. One such target was the Nida heavy machinery factory south of Baghdad. Mr Cohen said: "From the beginning of this operation, we've been careful to set realistic goals. We've also been careful not to either overstate or exaggerate the results as intelligence analysts study the very preliminary data." Responding to criticism that the raids had failed in their objectives, Mr Cohen said: "Some have characterised moderate damage as somehow being less than successful [but] when we make these preliminary assessments, what looks either to be light or moderate cannot be calibrated in terms of a normal understanding."

Independent analysts point out that it is particularly difficult to destroy Iraq's chemical and biological warfare capability since it is easy for Saddam to hide both the substances and information on how to manufacture them, some of which is held on computer disks. Mr Blair yesterday rejected the argument that the only course of action should be to depose Saddam — only thousands of ground troops could guarantee that. That, he said, would be disproportionate. He added: "But just because we can't get in the cage and strike him down, it doesn't mean we should leave the cage untouched and the bars open to hold him. What we have done is put him back firmly in the cage and secure it." The Prime Minister justified the military action by referring to "a new global reality. If those who abuse force to wage war are not confronted by those willing to use force to maintain peace, war becomes more likely." The cost of Operation Desert Fox in cruise missiles alone is about \$187 million. The RAF's attacks on Iraq cost Britain £25 million. Paul Beaver of Jane's Defence Weekly estimated yesterday.

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John 10:12

Iraq: After the missiles

Some of those now serving as Labour ministers had protested during the first Gulf war in 1991



A man surveys missile damage near Baghdad's labour and social affairs ministry yesterday, while in central Baghdad (right), life goes on as normal after the announcement that the bombing is over. PHOTOGRAPHS BY AP/WIDEWORLD AND PETER DUNCAN

Peace, but little comfort or joy

BAGHDAD: Despite a ceasefire, David Sharrock finds little evidence of seasonal cheer among members of the city's shrinking Christian community

IT WILL be a peaceful Christmas after all in Baghdad. At least that is what the Syrian Catholic congregation of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Deliverance were praying for yesterday as they gathered for Sunday mass.

Only a few hours earlier the newly impeached President Bill Clinton and Tony Blair had announced that their bombing mission had been successfully completed: Saddam's capability to threaten his neighbours had been usefully "degraded".

Just a few hours before the ceasefire announcement the last cruise missiles to fall on Baghdad had blazed across

the sky for the fourth and final night. One of the missiles had come to earth without detonating, nevertheless causing substantial damage to grounds belonging to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the university district. Three guards were injured, according to officials.

Delighted to have some proof that the famed accuracy of these "smart weapons" was either a myth or that their Western persecutors were deliberately targeting innocent civilians, the Ministry of Information rapidly organised a press convoy which, hurrying through the blackout conditions, doubtless sent US tracker satellites monitoring

unusual activity in Baghdad into a rather. An enormous city hole, a ruined gatehouse and two twisted cars were all the evidence that the cruise had gone astray. I found what appeared to be a wing fin tip with a serial number printed on it. The heavy metal stump of the missile was nearby.

Flattened around in the darkness and mud, several TV crews were reprimanded when they began turning their lights away from the wreckage to what lay beyond: a mural of Saddam with a little girl in a halcyon of his knee. Locals said we were within metres of a military academy for senior ranking army officers — Iraq's equivalent of Sandhurst.

The last bombardment took place shortly after 9.30pm on Saturday. But the uncertainty of what else lay in store and the first night of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, meant that the city was slow to wake up to the news of the ceasefire yesterday morning.

Munzer Kazanchi, a Christian Arab, had been listening intently to the BBC World Service all night. Although the news was good, his family had still chosen to stay home this morning instead of accompanying him to church.

Of Baghdad's estimated 250,000 Syrian Catholics, some 200 were gathered in their modern cathedral for the last Sunday before Christmas Day. It should have been a joyful morning but the mass was dedicated to Mr Kazanchi's cousin, Fuad Nakasha, who died three days earlier of a heart attack.

After a sombre service, the congregation of smartly dressed elderly men and women, with a few children, spilled out of the cathedral and chatted briefly with one another in front of a grotto dedicated to the Virgin Mary — a striking monument in a Muslim nation where the only image given official approval is that of Saddam.

Mr Kazanchi and other relatives were in no doubt that it was the overnight bombing



'Can you tell me what these bombs have achieved? Has anything changed? Only our suffering has increased, nothing else'
Baghdad woman

wanted to leave abruptly made his apologies and left.

A middle-aged woman, after being assured that her name would not be printed, took me to one side and admitted that the Christian community was shrinking fast. "Those who can get out are doing so. I want my children to go too, but I will stay. I am too old to begin again," she said.

"But I have a question also for you. Can you tell me what these bombs have achieved? Has anything changed before last week? Only our suffering has increased, nothing else."

Mr Kazanchi said the air strikes had cast a shadow over their Christmas celebrations. His wife would cook a turkey stuffed with rice and lamb and he would buy gifts for his daughter and son. But their friends from Jordan, who had arrived to spend the

Christmas season with them a week earlier, had returned home when the bombs began to fall and so they felt very sad and alone.

The priest, Monsignor Rafael Kuteiny, turned to speak. "These are very sad days. The Americans have bombed us for nothing. We don't understand why. It's the Iraqi people who decide if they want Saddam as their president. We ask the Americans to leave us in peace. Perhaps people abroad do not understand that."

Later, as life in Baghdad resumed its familiar routines and the city air was once more choked with fumes from the heavy traffic, Saddam appeared on television for the second time in three days. Invoking God's name, he congratulated his people for their successful resistance. "God is great," was his message.

Critics' cruise missiles targeted on Blair

BRITAIN: Prime Minister has lacked wholehearted support for war, says Ewen MacAskill

TONY BLAIR spent a lot of time yesterday answering questions from the media on the brief Iraqi war. He had a lot of persuading to do and will have a lot more in the weeks ahead.

Will this turn out to have been a good war for Mr Blair, a necessary operation to curb an evil dictator? Or will it be seen as over-hasty and ill-judged, a pointless action? In the worst scenario, will Mr Blair be perceived as having acted at the behest of the US,

to help a president in trouble at home?

Polls may show the Prime Minister has taken the public with him, even though there seems to have been little enthusiasm for this war, other than the discordant jingle in the Sun. But the Labour Party is another matter.

Although Tam Dalyell, Tony Benn and George Galloway were in a distinct minority when the war was debated in the Commons, their queasiness about the bombing of

Iraq was shared by many of their colleagues. Some of those now serving as ministers had protested during the first Gulf war in 1991 and there is no reason to believe they have changed their minds. Anecdotal evidence also suggests doubts among party activists.

The Prime Minister has opened himself up, for the first time in a long time, to criticism from the Tories that are finding their mark. The shadow Home Secretary, Michael Howard, yesterday called for a clear strategy and challenged Mr Blair's assertions on sanctions, nuclear inspectors and building a diplomatic consensus.

Mr Blair, at his press conference, insisted the short campaign had been "the right course and a just cause" because, without it, Saddam Hussein would have built up his weapons and terrorised the region.

Throughout this brief action, Mr Blair and his ministers have never looked entirely comfortable.

That is partly because the Labour Party's history has a strain of pacifism running through it. When Mr Blair spoke of "degrading" Saddam's military machine it did

not sound right coming from a Labour prime minister.

Another part of Labour history is a commitment to international law and the United Nations, and yet Britain has operated with the US without clear support.

In four days Mr Blair lost the image of working closer with other European countries that he has spent 18 months cultivating.

When dealing with the Northern Ireland peace process, Mr Blair appeared confident and had the wholehearted support of his party, the public and the world. There is not the same confidence or support for this action, and it seems headed for the deficit column.

US and Britain brace for terrorist reprisals

SECURITY: Americans at home and abroad are on high alert, writes Mark Tran in New York

NOW that the air strikes have been called off, the focus for British and US intelligence officers will switch to a new target: how to prevent Iraq and its friends from taking retaliatory terrorist action.

The Australian government yesterday confirmed that one of its citizens, the chief United Nations weapons inspector Richard Butler, had received death threats after issuing the report that prompted the bombing of Iraq.

Mr Butler arrived at the UN in New York last week with a police escort. The security detail was one of several precautionary measures as the US braces itself for attacks from Muslim extremists.

Last week it closed 38 embassies in Africa for at least two days against possible reprisals. The secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, said the administration took this highly unusual step on Thursday and Friday "because we are concerned about

general threats and the heightened situation".

The state department yesterday said no decision had been taken about their reopening this week.

"A number of African posts have received threats in recent weeks and our caution is fully justified," a state department official said.

The embassies were closed, in part, to avoid a repetition of the US embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in August that killed more than 220 people, including 12 Americans.

After the attacks, President Clinton ordered cruise missile strikes at a chemicals factory in Sudan and camps in Afghanistan run by the Saudi Osama

bin Laden, the FBI's most wanted international terrorist.

Even before the bombing of Iraq, US intelligence officials warned they had evidence that bin Laden might be planning an attack on Washington or New York in retaliation for the US raid on his Afghan camp.

In a coup for the US, a suspected top aide of bin Laden was yesterday turned over to US officials in Germany for extradition. Mamdouh Mahmoud Salim was taken to Munich airport and placed on a flight to the US, a Bavarian justice ministry spokesman, Gerhard Zierl, said.

The US is concerned not only about terrorist attacks but more generalised anger in

the Arab world that may engulf Americans. The state department has issued a worldwide warning to Americans to take precautions abroad.

In Morocco yesterday tens of thousands of demonstrators protested in the capital Rabat against the strikes on Iraq. Shouting "America, enemy of the people", they burned US and British flags.

In New York hundreds of extra police, and security guards blanketed airports, bus and train stations, federal buildings and tourist areas.

The police commissioner, Howard Safir, said the city was on high alert. "We always assume the worst possible case and take the precautions necessary," he said.

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President impeached

They chatted and gossiped, leisurely running their swipe cards through the voting machines



President Clinton and his wife, Hillary, tightly clasping hands at the White House while presenting confident faces to the world. He was about to address the nation following the House of Representatives' impeachment vote. PHOTOGRAPH BY HANNAH

Calculating Clinton's chances

THE JURY: In the labyrinth of Senate politics, hopes of a censure deal hover. **Martin Kettle** reports on the rules, procedures and haggling that will frame the president's trial

ON January 6, 100 state senators — a majority of them Bill Clinton's political foes — will take their seats in the wood-paneled chamber on Capitol Hill and inaugurate the first trial this century of an impeached American president. The fact that proceedings are expected to last between three to six months is concentrating the minds of the senators who will be required to sit at their desks for each day's hearings.

It is not just the hum-drum quality of the seats that are causing concern among

the president, leaving him disgraced but not dismissed. At present, his chances of such a compromise look promising. A two-thirds majority of 67 votes is required to throw Mr Clinton out of office, and with the Republicans commanding 55 votes at most, the odds are that the trial will end in an acquittal. In that case, says the White House, why not spare the nation the long spectacle and agree a quicker and more dignified third way?

Many political realists in both parties agree, including the man Mr Clinton beat for the presidency in 1996, former senator Bob Dole. So does former Republican president Gerald Ford. Some of today's senators have signalled they are in the market for a compromise too.

But, as the events of the past three months have shown, it is one thing to wish for a compromise deal and a very different thing to get one. Through the conservative Republicans who dominate the party are hostile to a com-

promise, the White House has also fluffed a number of chances to make a deal too.

Many Republicans, including the Senate majority leader Trent Lott, privately hope that Mr Clinton can be forced to resign. Hopes and fears that public opinion will turn against Mr Clinton probably guarantee that there will be no quick censure deal.

Mr Clinton's continued defiant approach to the process remains a very serious problem. On Saturday within hours of becoming the first elected president to be impeached, he again chose to belittle the charges against him, saying they related to "what I did wrong in my personal life", and blaming the Republicans for what the spin-doctors now call "the politics of personnel destruction".

There is little doubt that most Americans want the political self-censorship to stop. But it is an open question whether they really see Mr Clinton as part of the solu-

tion or as part of the problem. At the moment, just he tends to get the benefit of the doubt among Americans who do not see why their political leaders cannot give them a quiet life. But that may not continue.

The presidential tactics smack of the politics of continued self-delusion. But that does not mean that a compromise will not happen, and there will be intensive behind-the-scenes efforts to bring it about — perhaps involving the Northern Ireland peacekeeper, former senator George Mitchell.

The Senate will begin pre-trial proceedings on January 6, with senators being sworn in as jurors for the trial, and Chief Justice William Rehnquist presiding. Mr Clinton will be summoned to appear to answer the charges — though he is not expected to show up in person — and a trial date will be set. Most observers expect a gap of about a month.

This pre-trial period is the time in which the real effort

to strike a compromise deal will become intense. Unlike in a normal trial, the senators can at any stage choose to end the impeachment trial by a simple majority. This discretion could be the key to the solution that the Clinton camp is now seeking.

To achieve that deal, however, the White House and its allies must win a second Senate numbers game. Just as the 55 Democrats will need at least 12 Democrats in order to convict Mr Clinton, so the 45 Republicans will need at least six Republicans to secure the simple majority to bring the trial to an end.

Once it starts, the trial must take precedence over all other congressional business. That means the Senate sitting every working day until the process is complete. In practice, that will see senators sitting every morning to deal with legislative and political business, then going into trial mode from late morning onwards.

The trial will follow adversarial rules. The case will

be presented by the trial "managers", who will make the prosecution case. These managers, who were appointed by the House on Saturday after the impeachment votes, consist of a group of Republican members of the House judiciary committee, headed by Congressman Henry Hyde, the committee chairman. They will be assisted by the committee's lawyers, headed by David Schippers, and others appointed by them.

Mr Clinton will be represented by a team of lawyers, probably including the White House senior counsel Charles Ruff and special counsel Greg Craig, as well as Mr Clinton's private lawyers, David Kendall and Nicole Seligman.

As in any other trial, witnesses can be called, so there is every likelihood of the principals in the Starr Report being asked to testify. Monica Lewinsky would obviously be the most eagerly awaited witness, but all the other familiar figures will get their day.

If senators want to participate, except as jurors, they must ask a written question through the presiding judge. The involvement of the Chief Justice will result in the Supreme Court's business, as well as that of the Senate, being disrupted by the trial.

When the trial has finished, Senate will then go into closed session to consider its verdict. Then, and only then, can the senators express their views, in short speeches limited to 15 minutes each.

The clerk of the senate will read out the name of each senator, who will answer "convict" or "acquittal".

Conviction automatically means dismissal and the Senate's only discretion on conviction is whether to impose the additional penalty of barring the president from holding public office again.

Given Mr Clinton's relative youth — he will be 55 when he leaves the White House, even if he is not convicted — this is a sentence with teeth.

History made with solemnity and farce

THE VOTE: Few in the House were even paying attention when the fateful moment came, reports **Jonathan Freedland**

HISTORY, when it comes, does not always know how to behave. It doesn't always sit up straight; sometimes it forgets to bow its head in reverence for the moment. It fails to remember the future generations who will look back and judge. So it was when the 435 members of the US House of Representatives cast the vote that will etch their own place in history. They did not give the chroniclers of the future the archive pictures they will expect — sombre rows of men and women, their shoulders heavy with responsibility, silently resolving to impeach the President of the United States for only the second time in that nation's history.

Instead they milled around, chatted and gossiped, leisurely running their swipe-cards through the electronic voting machines that tallied up their votes on two scoreboards.

The House did not sit as one, on the edge of its seat, waiting for the fateful moment which would make Bill Clinton the first impeached president since Andrew Johnson in 1868, a figure more disgraced even than Richard Nixon. When that moment came, at 1.20pm on Saturday, and the column marked "Yea" reached the winning post of 218 votes, few on the floor were paying attention. It fell to the history-conscious press gallery to point at the board and to pause at what they had witnessed. Maybe it was all too much.

came as a genuine surprise. There had been no leak, no speculation.

Falteringly, the House recovered and continued the debate which had consumed 12 hours the previous day. The speeches were never longer than five minutes, some just 30 seconds, many of them repetitive and gratuitous, members addressing not the House, but the TV audience in their own districts back home.

Republicans insisted that they were not punishing sex, but perjury. At stake was the rule of law, the underpinning of the US Constitution. Democrats pleaded for protection for the president, from the solemn to the farcical. "A disaster movie scripted by the Marx Brothers," quipped Democrat Barney Frank.

Within minutes came a twist that threatened to overshadow even the monumental business before the House. Republican Bob Livingston of Louisiana, destined to be the new Speaker, stepped forward and called on President Clinton to resign.

"No, you resign!" bellowed a chorus of Democrats, blocking a chamber less prone to such parliamentary harracking than our own House of Commons. More swiftly than any of them could have anticipated, Mr Livingston obliged.

First, he apologised for his own record of serial adultery, which he had been forced to confess on Thursday. Then, "I must set the example that I hope President Clinton will follow. I will not stand for Speaker."

The oxygen sucked out of the chamber, a ghostly silence descended. The American system of democracy is not like our own parliamentary resignations are rare, especially ones which

slapped, his hand shaken — a display of that special brand of unity unique to the lost cause. He had fought the most valiant fight, but his own side knew they were beaten.

The contrast in that moment was clear. On one side of the House were the Democrats. If you blurred your eyes, it was an effusion of colour. Women dressed in purple, green and red; men with black or brown faces; some old, some young. The Republican side remained seated, an assembly of whey-faced, thin-tipped, blue-blurred men. They were sitting — in judgment. The Democrats staged a walkout but, with only one exit open, got clogged up. Once out, they had to troop back in again 74 minutes later to vote against what they called a partisan coup d'état.

By then their fury had run out. Some slumped in their seats, forlornly watching the scoreboard. Republicans clustered, plotting the Livingston succession. The clock ticked away the 15 minutes of voting time. The Yeas mounted, the Nays trailed. Until the hammer came down, and the acting Speaker announced the result: impeachment.

There were three more votes, for each of the remaining articles. As soon as they were done, there was a stampede for the doors, like thieves escaping the scene of the crime. But Henry Hyde, the Republican judiciary chairman who became Bill Clinton's chief prosecutor, stayed behind, charged with one more task.

He had to walk the marble halls to the office of the secretary of the Senate, to hand over formally the articles of impeachment, now in a leather-bound folder. "Here," the gesture seemed to say, "you deal with it."

LOCAL HERO: Michael Ellison traces Billy Blyth's origins in Arkansas

IF ONLY Billy Blyth had turned out more like Mike Huckabee then maybe it would never have come to this. In fact, their paths did run in parallel for a while: both came from Hope, and both were elected governor of Arkansas. There the similarities end. Mike Huckabee became a Baptist preacher and Billy Blyth became Bill Clinton.

Hempstead county has plenty of Baptist preachers. But there is only one Bill Clinton, and his story, if not quite log-cabin-to-White-House, shows it is still possible in the United States to make it to the top.

"I still remember a place called Hope," Mr Clinton said when the Democrats made him their candidate for president nearly seven years ago. The town still remembers him, too, even

if he was only seven when he left.

This settlement of 11,000 owes its identity to the president, and it takes his problems personally.

Elaine Johnson has a word for what the Republicans are doing. "It is un-American," says the proprietor of the Presidential Shoppe, a name which almost suggests he is already history.

There are no monuments yet to Governor Huckabee. But he will have done himself no harm at the week-end when he signed the death warrants of two murderers who will have a lethal injection on the same day — the fourth multiple execution in as many years in the Natural State.

It was into this community that Billy Blyth was born in 1946 of a vivacious mother and a much-married father, already four months dead in a car wreck. Grandparents looked after the child in a wood-frame house for his first four years.

Then Mom Virginia married Roger Clinton, a used car dealer and runner of illicit liquor, and the family moved up the road to Hot Springs. Bill Clinton, who

took his stepfather's name at 15, has probably never forgotten the honk of the freight trains in Hope, founded only 123 years ago by a railroad pioneer.

But if the president wants to jog his memory he need only drop into Hope Visitors' Centre. Here is young Billy Blyth in his Hopalong Cassidy outfit, with a classmate, with stepfather Roger, and in a hospital bed after breaking a leg.

All of a sudden the photographs show a grown man, Governor Clinton, then President Clinton.

"We're ashamed of what happened but we're not ashamed of him," says Minnie Ella Schmitt, aged 71, who works in the centre. "I voted for him every time he stood for anything. He's let a lot of people down but he's a hometown boy, we raised him up from when he was a little hitty boy. We're a church-going bunch of people here in the Christian belt and I can't approve of his life in the stinking department."

"He's always too busy doing other things to come here now. He only makes it for the funerals. Uncle Buddy was the last in '97."

You are more than welcome to eat in Hope at 6pm, except that you will be told, with great Southern civility, that they're shut. Perhaps a drink, then? Sorry, Hempstead is a dry county. Across the Red River in Fulton, Wanda Kountz, aged 45, stands behind the counter of the Boll Weevil beer store. "If Hillary's not hysing on it why should we?" she says. "The people that's persecuting him, there's a lot of them done worse."

Even the people who don't care for the president want him to stay. "I'm really not for Clinton but what he's done is not worthy of impeachment," says Shelby Hayne, aged 46, leaning against a pawn shop hunting-rifle rack. "If he goes we get Gore, and he's too strict on gun control."

Pastor Roy Parker left Mr Clinton out of his sermon yesterday. The congregation had heard enough about that. But the passage from Isaiah may have carried a message. "I have swept away your offences like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you."

society

Every Wednesday in the

The Guardian

July 10 1998



The Guardian's Christmas appeal offers readers the chance to donate to up to eight charities. Today Amelia Gentleman reports on the work of Jessie's Fund



Vickie Quinney, 15, and Jessie's Fund music therapist Stephanie Thompson at Acorn Children's Hospice. PHOTOGRAPH BY CLARE LUM

Music that eases the last days of dying children

WHEN everything else has failed, one of the simplest and most effective ways to help terminally ill children cope with the prospect of death is music.

Everyone has the ability to respond to music. With its capacity to soothe, inspire and heal, it can transcend illness and disability in a way nothing else can. As specialists begin to appreciate its power, music therapy is increasingly being used to support dying children in their last weeks.

Carers report that they have been able to make contact with children no longer able to communicate in any other way. Therapists use it to boost the quality of the remaining life the children may have. Jessie's Fund, a small and relatively new charity, is working to raise money to bring this therapy to children in hospices across the country. The treatment does not come cheap, but its benefits are startling.

Leslie Schatzberger, the charity's founder, said: "Because there is so little life left, the time that they have must be absolutely the highest quality."

"This is a subject close to her heart: her own daughter, Jessie George, became seriously ill soon after her ninth birthday. "At first the doctors thought it might be just an ear infection, but she continued to feel dizzy and then started to see double. She was diagnosed with a brain tumour in December 1993," she says. "We knew there was an incredibly small chance of her survival."

The family decided to raise money to send her for treatment in America. But she was never well enough to go, and five months later she died. With some £12,000 already raised for the trip to America, Jessie's parents, both professional musicians, decided to spend it on music therapy for other children in hospices. Jessie's Fund was set up in memory of their daughter.

The charity aims to enable every UK children's hospice to have access to a part-time qual-

The charity

Jessie's Fund is a registered charity dedicated to helping sick children through music. It promotes the use of music therapy in children who are dying as a result of illness or disability. The human ability to appreciate and respond to music is inborn and usually remains unimpaired by handicap, injury or illness. Music therapy offers a safe, space to release feelings.

Jessie's Fund is a winner of the Guardian Jerwood prize for small charities. It aims to provide hospices with musical instruments

and staff trained in basic techniques of music therapy. By 2002 it aims to equip the country's 16 children's hospices and have a trained music therapist working at least one day a week.

Five hospices are already equipped. The charity provides 100 per cent of the cost for the first year, 50 per cent for the second year and 25 per cent for the third year — but it needs financial support to continue its work.

A £1,000 donation will equip a hospice with a basic range of musical instruments. A part-time music therapist costs £150 a week.

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ified therapist by 2002. Stephanie Thompson, one of the music therapists sponsored by Jessie's Fund, is an ardent proponent of its efforts. She explains: "It is more about boosting children's quality of life in their last days than teaching them anything specific."

"Dying is such a difficult and bewildering time for children — especially when they are going through difficult and painful treatment — that a lot of them don't know how they feel. They are still very young and death is a big issue."

Usually both child and therapist take part, playing, singing and listening. Children are not taught how to play an instrument, but are encouraged to use percussion and other accessible instruments to participate in the session. Recent research suggests that music releases endorphins, the brain's painkillers, but the complete advantages of therapy are hard to pin down.

"Music can have a very profound effect," Ms Thompson says. "It can release frustrations and identify moods and feelings they didn't even know they were experiencing."

Ms Schatzberger explains that the sessions are particularly useful for children who are losing control over their lives as they lose the ability to speak or move. "Through

music, they can convey feelings without using words."

She relates anecdotes which demonstrate the unexpected power of music. For months one two-year-old girl spent her waking hours crying. Nothing could comfort her, except music sessions, when she would become peaceful. "The trauma of being trapped in a life so painful that she had to express herself by crying all the time was so intense, that to be able to have some relief was fantastic," Ms Schatzberger says.

There was also a teenage boy, who had been in a persistent vegetative state for more than a year. Doctors said there was no hope of ever getting through to him. Through therapy, using electronic instruments, he began to be able to control sound by moving his head. "He started to cry. He had been trapped without communicating."

Occasionally distressing, Ms Thompson also finds the time she spends at the Acorn Children's Hospice in Birmingham extremely rewarding. "It is a great privilege to share this time with someone. It is the end of something, but it isn't necessarily a sad time, the focus is not on ending, but on quality," she says.

"Sometimes all you're doing is working on getting a smile out of someone."

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Search for girl, 2, after mother is found murdered

Martin Wainwright

POLICE across the country are searching for a two-year-old girl who has vanished after the brutal beating and murder of her mother.

Jade Lester was last seen in the Kensington area of central Liverpool, where unemployed Sharon Lester, aged 28, was found dead with multiple stab wounds by the child's distraught grandmother at the weekend.

Fifty Merseyside detectives led by an assistant chief constable have been put on the case, with senior officers saying yesterday that they were "desperately anxious" about the little girl.

Ms Lester's boyfriend, John Park, a 24-year-old unemployed joiner from Tuebrook, Liverpool, is being interviewed, but has told police that he has no idea where Jade may be.

Det Supt Russ Walsh said that it was critical that they find Jade's father, who used to

live with Miss Lester and his daughter but has moved elsewhere.

Mr Walsh also appealed for information about two men seen at the murder house in Ling Street with a white van only an hour before Ms Lester's body was found.

Witnesses from the street have described a man in his 20s coming out of Ms Lester's house at 12.30pm on Saturday and signalling to the driver of the van, a "box-type" vehicle with roller shutters at the rear, to take it round to an alley at the back of the house. Mr Walsh said: "We are anxious to trace both the driver and the person at the premises, as well as a man who was repairing a yellow van in Ling Street at the time the men were seen."

Detectives have not established a motive for the killing of Ms Lester, whose body was found in a downstairs room. She had been severely beaten before being stabbed with a sharp implement which has not been found.

Tests have suggested that the murder may have taken

place 48 hours before Ms Lester's body was discovered by her mother, who collapsed in front of neighbours.

Mr Walsh said that the time lag, and the last definite sighting of Jade a week before the murder, increased anxiety about her.

Forensic experts will return to the house today to continue checks for any sign of a break-in. Detectives are also trying to establish if anything is missing from the house.

Assistant Chief Constable Paul Stephenson said yesterday: "Our prime concern is to ensure that the little girl is safe and well, and to ease the distress of the family, which is considerable. We want anyone who is with Jade at this time or knows where she is to make contact and confirm that she is safe and well."

Residents in Ling Street returned from a church Christmas party to find Ms Lester's house sealed off and police everywhere. Cleaner June Joel, aged 41, said they had moved in only recently.

Supermarkets 'charge more in poor areas'

Silvia Plass

THE poor are paying more than the better off this Christmas for a typical selection of seasonal goods, a consumers' survey of supermarkets reveals today.

Price wars between rival suburban outlets have added to the pinch in low income areas, where poor transport and limited choice create a virtually captive market.

Stark contrasts in the checks on 100 stores include a 50p offer for Sainsbury's 100g pack of own-brand coffee in relatively comfortable Crosby, Merseyside, compared with £1.79 for Kwik Save's own brand at Heathtown, West Midlands, an area of very high deprivation.

The total basket at Crosby Sainsbury's, including turkey, sprouts and crackers, cost £22.32 — £10 less than the same offer at Sainsbury, Cavendish Drive, a few miles away but in a much less well-off area.

The survey, carried out in the second week of December by the charity Citizen Organisation (COF), will be sent to the Office of Fair Trading by the group, which is also

seeking talks with the leading supermarkets.

Peter Powers, of COF, said: "This survey, carried out by ordinary people in their own communities, shows how retailers use their local monopoly power in poorer neighbourhoods to extort excessive profits from the people who can least afford it."

The COF monitors, based on churches, schools, mosques, trade unions and other local groups, checked prices of basic goods, including soup, vegetables and bread, along with Christmas specialities like pudding and satsumas. The survey at branches of Tesco, Sainsbury, Somerfield, Asda, the Co-op and Kwik Save found the four most expensive baskets at Sainsbury in Wolverhampton town centre (£24.89), Tesco in Canary Wharf, east London (£29.33), Sainsbury in Whitechapel, east London (£28.70), and Somerfield in Hackney, east London (£27.18).

The lowest price was at Kwik Save, in middle income Tottenham, north London (£22.70). Yvonne Hayes, aged 45, a mother of four, went to Tesco in Parson Cross, north Sheffield, one of the largest council estates in Europe. "It was

interesting because I don't usually shop there. Actually it wasn't a bad shop for this area. You get bread for 19p and a tin of beans is 9p. But there were several Christmas puddings at £7.50. I did wonder how many people on the estate could afford that."

Mandy Aitken, aged 34, also a mother of four and organiser of Sheffield's COF group, Impact, claimed: "There's a degree of evidence that supermarkets seem to be charging more in poorer areas, either because of competition or because people on the working-class estate haven't the chance to get away to the out-of-town centres. You are sort of penalised for having to shop locally."

Kwik Save and the Co-op came out in the survey at the bottom of the price range, but local variations were also marked.

Mr Powers said: "We hope the Office of Fair Trading report to be published in the new year will encourage the Government to consider the alarming power of the big four retailers."

COF will conduct follow-up surveys in the new year.

Bosnia author 'MI6 man'

Richard Norton-Taylor

DOMINIC Lawson, editor of the Sunday Telegraph, acknowledged yesterday that articles written under a false name when he was editor of the Spectator magazine were "probably" written by an MI6 officer.

The Guardian last week disclosed that "Kenneth Roberts", author of the articles which were written under a Sarajevo dateline in 1994, was a member of the British foreign intelligence service.

The articles appeared to be part of an attempt to influence public opinion during the Bosnian civil war by suggesting atrocities were being carried

out by all sides. Mr Lawson told the Guardian he had no means of knowing whether the author was an MI6 officer.

However, yesterday he said claims that "Kenneth Roberts" was in reality an MI6 agent were "probably right".

He referred to threats to the Times late last week from what he described as "senior intelligence sources" that a D Notice would be served in an attempt to prevent the identity of "Kenneth Roberts" being revealed.

Mr Lawson also said in yesterday's Sunday Telegraph that he remembers asking "Kenneth Roberts" whether he had written under a pseudonym for any other publication. Mr Lawson said that he replied: "Yes, the Times."

Mr Lawson was alleged in the Commons last week to have been an MI6 "asset" who was paid for his services for British intelligence. Mr Lawson denied ever having been "an agent either paid or unpaid of MI6 or any other government agency". In his column yesterday, he wrote: "I have never worked for the intelligence services."

It was reported yesterday that British intelligence officers claimed to be journalists from the Spectator as a cover while working in Russia and eastern Europe. The Sunday Times claimed at least three MI6 officers were instructed to claim they were working for the magazine.

Roy Greenslade, G2, page 10

Spice Girls' Xmas triple

THE Spice Girls have topped the Christmas singles chart for the third year running with their Goodbye single.

Their pipedreams' Chocolate Salty Balls — a spin-off from the Channel 4 cartoon South Park.

Goodbye had sold nearly 200,000 copies, according to midweek sales figures, about 30,000 more than Cher's Denise and Johnny's Especially For You reached number three, eclipsing Cher at number four with her former

chart-topper Believe. The Beatles had consecutive Christmas chart-toppers from 1963 to 1965.

The Spice Girls have had a concerted marketing campaign, which began in the first half of November.

Man's body was 'expertly dismembered'

Simon Cooper

THE remains of a young man found on the banks of the Thames a week ago were expertly dismembered, possibly by someone with medical knowledge, police have revealed.

But mystery surrounds who the victim was or why he was killed.

An international murder inquiry has now been launched after police could find no match for the man in UK missing persons files or in fingerprint records.

A total of 11 body parts were recovered from the foreshore of the Thames in Deptford, south-east London, after a passerby noticed them at last Monday.

A post-mortem the next day revealed the man was hit on

the side of the head with a blunt instrument before being strangled. He is thought to have been killed about 24 hours before his remains were found.

He is described as being in his 20s, 5ft 7in to 5ft 9in tall, with olive coloured "Mediterranean type" skin, dark hair, dark brown eyes and of stocky build.

One of his most distinctive characteristics were his teeth, which were in "superb condition", although three are missing. The pathologist's report states the teeth were professionally removed, but had the roots left in — a common dentistry technique on the Continent. Interpol has now been called in.

Detective Chief Inspector Brian Bowden-Brown, who is leading the enquiry, said the

only clues were the body parts themselves. "Each limb was in three pieces having been dismembered at the joint. It was done by someone who knew what they were doing; someone with medical knowledge, or a vet, or a butcher or someone used to cutting up meat."

The victim's torso, one foot and the lower part of one leg were still missing. He was preparing to have a model of the man's face reconstructed by forensic experts. He hopes this might bring the same success enjoyed by Scottish police, who this week were able to solve a four-month-old mystery after scientists from Glasgow university produced a 3D computer-generated reconstruction of the face of a man found on the shores of Loch Lomond.

Crack on call as police clear dealers off streets

Alan Travis Home Affairs Editor

CRACK cocaine addicts are using "pizza" telephone ordered home deliveries as police operations drive dealers off city streets.

New Home Office research says that crack has not taken hold in Britain in the same way as it has dominated the drug markets of America's urban ghettos, but it does pose problems in a few English cities. The study, based on in-depth interviews with 79 new and long-term crack addicts in north-west England, shows that the drug is still being actively marketed by dealers.

"Given crack's negative

image, it is often sold as 'rock' or 'stone', particularly to new youngsters. Established users receive a home delivery service," say the researchers. They add that in the last two years this has particularly been a feature of the drug scene in the Greater Manchester area, where street sales have largely disappeared due to police activity.

The researchers traced the habits of one group of crack users over three years with the first interviews taking place in 1995.

By 1997, a quarter had given up crack, another quarter had cut down their consumption, but up to half were "resolute rockheads" who used crack daily alongside "considerable quantities" of

other drugs, most notably heroin, methadone and cannabis. The researchers call this expensive kind of multi-drug habit a "rock repertoire".

More than two-thirds said they never injected crack, but

Established users receive a home delivery service

smoked it, either on foil, or more commonly, in a pipe. The study also confirms strong links between drug-taking, crime and the black economy, and says the long-term addicts spent an average

of £20,000 a year on their addiction. Crack prices had remained fairly stable over the three years.

Most raised the necessary funds through crime such as theft, shoplifting, fraud and burglary, with women engaging in prostitution and men in drug-dealing.

In-depth interviews with 29 new crack users showed that despite the drug's high cost and only brief "buzz", its use is slowly spreading. Most new users tended to be slightly younger, in their early 20s, and overwhelmingly white and male. The Home Office researchers say that crack use in England has, until now, mainly appealed to those with a history of heroin abuse, and who are unem-

ployed and live in the poorest communities. "The most worrying development in this study was the discovery that there were some 'recreational' users, without any experience of heroin, or other opiates, who smoked crack as 'stone' and who felt they could manage and control its use as they had other drugs, such as amphetamines and ecstasy," say the researchers.

They add that crack's high price and ambivalent image has limited this spread, but they warn that if there is a significant drop in its street price then it will accelerate.

Evolutionary crack cocaine careers, Kevin Brain, Howard Parker and Tim Bottomley, Home Office Research Findings No 85

Spain mourns matador fêted by famous

John Hooper, Southern Europe Correspondent

FANS of bullfighting were yesterday mourning one of the great matadors of the 20th century. Antonio Ordóñez was among the very few to win comparison with the likes of Belmonte, Joselito and Manolete.

As several hundred packed into the Esperanza de Triana church in Seville for a funeral mass yesterday, the bullfighter's body was taken to the city's town hall so that people could pay their final respects.

Although Ordóñez was only 66 when he died on Saturday, he was a figure who inspired memories of a distant era. His most celebrated friendships were with Ernest Hemingway and Orson Welles, whose ashes were buried on his ranch near Ronda in southern Spain.

Ordóñez rose to fame in the 1950s. His subsequent rivalry with Luis Miguel Dominguín formed the basis for Hemingway's 1959 work *The Dangerous Summer*.

He also occupied a central role in one of the most thought-provoking books on bullfighting to be written by a non-Spaniard. Bull Fever, published in 1954 and written by the theatre critic Kenneth Tynan, followed two matadors with contrasting styles: the classically restrained Ordóñez, and Miguel Báez, known as "Litril".

Ordóñez was born in Ronda in 1932. He was the son of the celebrated matador Cayetano, who was fictionalised by Hemingway in *The Sun Also Rises*.



Ordóñez in his heyday

Swiss feel Europe's tightening grip



Birth of the euro

In the land of bankers, the single currency symbolises a more profound pressure for change, writes Stephen Bates in Geneva

FROM his office above the enormous Migros supermarket in Brensbühl, Guy Vibourel can watch with satisfaction as his customers' cars with their Swiss numberplates sweep in to do their Christmas shopping.

Nothing strange, except that although Migros is a Swiss company and many of its shoppers are Swiss, Brensbühl is actually in France, even though it is only a mile or so outside Geneva.

Despite the limitations which the customs authorities at the border post down the road impose — only a couple of bottles of wine, no more than 800g of meat per person in the car — many Swiss take the ride, because they know that the Swiss products they buy will be 25 per cent cheaper than in the company's supermarkets in Geneva.

Migros is booming; there will be a million customers at its two local French stores this year, more than a third of them Swiss.

Mr Vibourel does not expect that to change once the French swap their francs for euros. The tills are already programmed for such transactions, even though euro notes and coins will not be issued for another three years.

And he thinks the Swiss, who are not in the EU and not adopting the new currency, will not have any problems. If the Swiss franc remains mighty, especially if it stays stronger than the euro, they will want to come even more.

"If the Swiss franc is strong our prices will be even more attractive — we get 15 per cent more customers then," he says contentedly.

"The euro will be imposed on the Swiss as a second currency whether they are in or

not. They will get used to it like a second language. At the moment they are just curious, because they are very attached to their own money, just like the British and the pound. But if the euro is strong... well, we are very positive about the single currency.

"It will be good for our business. We have an extra advantage — Swiss people like coming here because we are a Swiss company, with Swiss standards, cleaner, and they can express their civic pride by coming here. And it's much cheaper."

The debate on the euro is just getting under way in Switzerland, but it is already feeding into a wider debate about the country's traditionally neutral and disengaged place in international affairs.

The Swiss are feeling under increasing pressure to join in institutions such as the United Nations and the European Union, and the single currency could hit them at the very core of their existence: their banks and finance houses.

There is a dilemma, too. Traditionally the Swiss franc has been strong but, with the arrival of the euro, the franc's very attractiveness may undermine the national economy.

If the euro is weak, investors from France, Italy and Germany may be inclined to load their savings into Switzerland, which could destabilise an already sluggish economy as it did when the same thing happened to the mark, lira and French franc during the recession in the early 1990s.

So the Swiss may have to keep their interest rates even lower than they are now. If in the end they decide they have to join the euro, the rates will have to go up, causing even more strain.



The Swiss stand by their independence, but how much longer can they hold out against the encompassing European Union?

PHOTOGRAPH LPPH

Why I love the euro

PETER TSCHOPP is an economics professor at the University of Geneva and Radical Party politician.

"We never thought there would be a single currency. Now there is a big chance we will have to join and I am in favour of that. Otherwise the Swiss franc will be very exposed."

This is an opportunity to open the whole issue of Switzerland and Europe. Within three years we will be carrying euros in one



pocket and Swiss francs, or dollars, in the other."

Why I hate the euro

HANS KAUFMANN is chief economist at Julius Bär finance house in Zurich.

"We have already used up all our monetary weapons to keep the Swiss franc stable. The Swiss Bank could not intervene if the franc was pushed up in value again as a result of the euro. There would be damage to industry. I don't see how we can afford to join."



would be a small country among heavyweights.

Swiss stance at a glance

Why doesn't Switzerland join the European Union? The Swiss don't like joining anything, even international bodies based on their own soil. It only has observer status at the UN and rejected joining the European Economic Area — a free trade region wider than the EU — in 1992.

Would joining the single

currency damage its traditional independence? Yes, because it would have to sign up to the EU first. **Who's in favour and who's against?** Most of the main political parties are in favour. But about half of the country, especially in the conservative, German-speaking areas, is against.

Joining the EU, France, and Italy's speakers are more positive but form only 20 and 30 per cent of the population respectively. The government has promised not to put it to the vote until 2004. **What if the referendum is, say, 100-0?** Not necessarily. There's a double lock referendum which

means that before a majority of voters and the 26 cantons — each of which has an equal say — must agree. **How will it affect the mighty Swiss franc?** It wouldn't really for many years. **It would be a big risk if they agreed to open market rates.** Currently about 2 per cent below even the German mark.

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"When I went to the Gulf I was hoping that I would die there, actually. It's a ghastly thing to say but that rather romantic notion of dying in battle... So much nicer than all the tabloid mess one's had to endure."

James Hewitt talks to Sabine Durrant

G2 p5

Gave it, Get the mistletoe out. I'm home for Xmas.

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News in brief

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With all you want for the

With a year of Portuguese rule to go, John Gittings reports from the colony on high stakes for those living there

Macau countdown begins with killing

THE final countdown to the handover of Macau has begun with an angry triad killing, the latest in a series of bombs and shootings. It ushers in a difficult year ahead, as Portugal prepares to surrender sovereignty to China after four and a half centuries — on December 20 1999.

A week ago, a lone gunman walked up to the quiet Caravela coffee bar just yards from the promenade and shot dead one prison warden and injured another. The gunman was almost certainly hired from the mainland.

The warden was part of a team sent from Portugal to strengthen security at Macau prison, where the notorious triad gangster "Broken Tooth Kot" is being held. Yet the lesson of the recent triad violence is that Macau will be safer once the Portuguese have left.

"Their leaders are afraid of the Chinese," says independent legislator Ng Kuok Cheong. "They want to establish themselves before it's too late."

The recent execution in Guangzhou of the Hong Kong kidnapper "Big Spender" and several of his gang members sent a grim signal of Chinese resolve.

The Macau government has reacted with claims that there is an "overall drop" in the crime rate — although it admits that the incidence of arson, kidnapping and other serious offences has risen.

Macau presents a pleasant facade of Portuguese rule, with good restaurants and fine baroque churches. But many residents regard the government as out of touch and mainly concerned with a smooth escape from Portugal's last colonial possession.

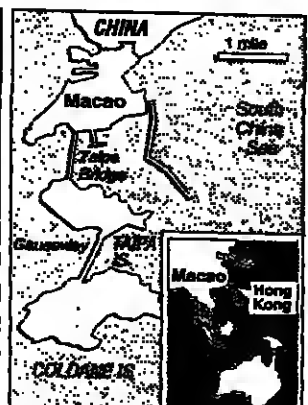
Unlike Hong Kong under the British, little effort has been made to groom Macau Chinese for senior positions in the government. Last week China pointedly called for greater effort to "localise" the civil service.

Ethnic Chinese make up 95 per cent of the population, but only seven out of 50 senior civil servants are local-born Chinese.

"Most officials here are ex-officers who have come to make money," says a Portuguese critic. "Macau is like a military encampment."

This week the Hong Kong-based Far Eastern Economic Review highlights the "get-rich-quick deals" which abound.

"Many among the territory's Chinese population," says the Review, "are convinced that the departing Portuguese, as well as some mainland Chinese officials, are squeezing Macau dry."



vinced that the departing Portuguese, as well as some mainland Chinese officials, are squeezing Macau dry. The vast majority of Macau Chinese actively look forward to "returning to the motherland". This reflects Portugal's historical failure to co-opt more than the small minority of mixed descent — the approximately 10,000 so-called Macanese.

"The Macanese are patriotic so they have never identified with the Portuguese. The Macanese media is completely behind Beijing," says Mr Ng.

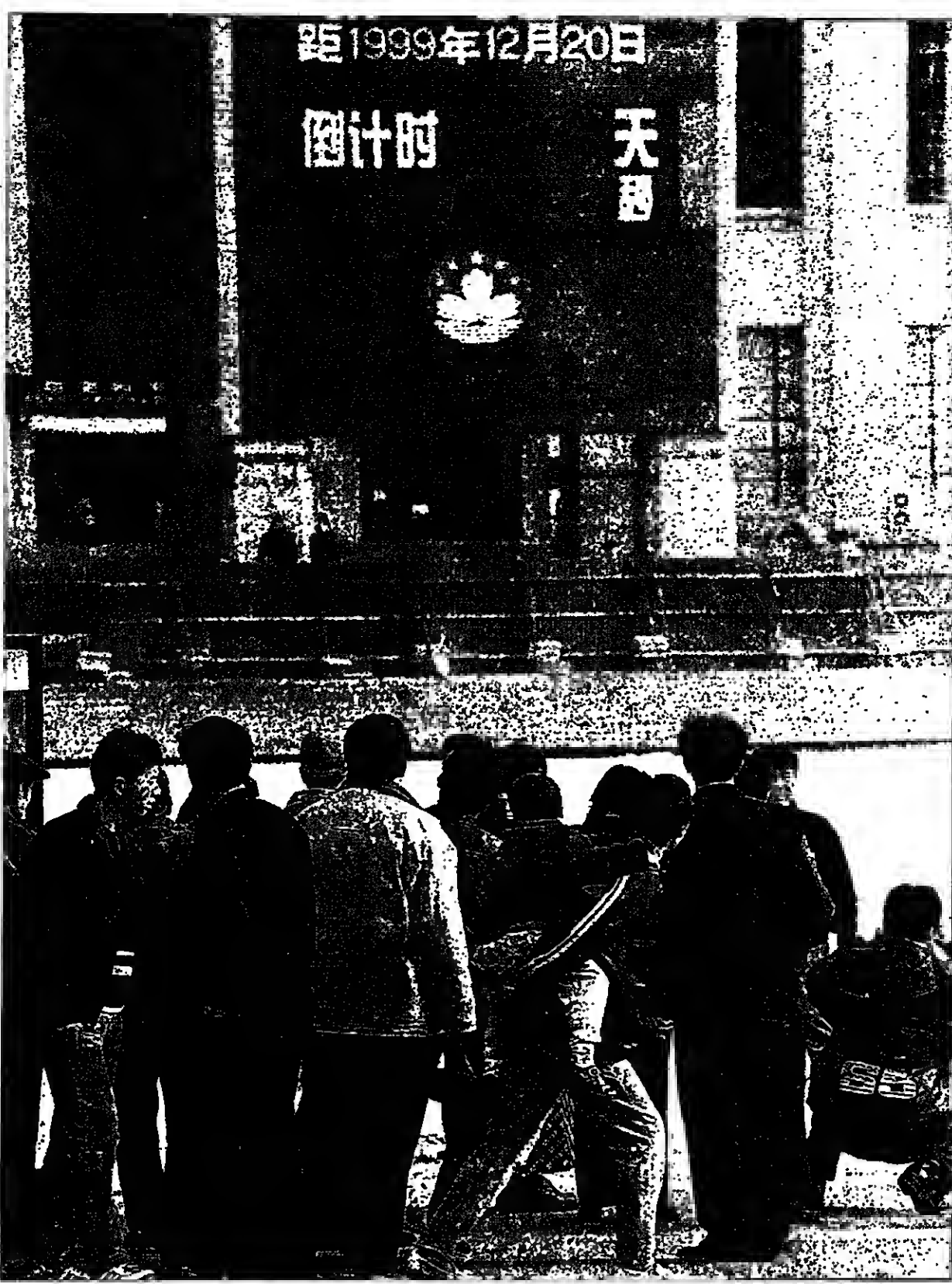
Amnesty International has said it will be campaigning in the coming year to highlight a lack of adequate safeguards for independence of the judiciary and some ambiguities about the application of international human rights treaties to Macau.

The main business of Macau remains the provision of gambling and related activities for citizens of Hong Kong and further afield. Much of the triad violence is generated by turf wars to control lucrative loan-shark operations in the casinos.

Stanley Ho, the Macau tycoon whose formal position is managing director of the gambling monopoly STDM (Macau Tourism and Entertainment Corporation), says that gambling is there to stay.

"China was pragmatic enough... to spell out clearly that for historical reasons the gaming industry... can carry on for another 50 years without change," he says.

Macau's new international airport is one of a number of areas of the colony which are undergoing a major overhaul. It handles 2 million passengers a year against a planned 5 million. Fewer than 10 of the 60 check-in desks are usually in operation. Most of the traffic is from Taiwan, ferrying islanders to mainland China, but if direct links between Taiwan and China are established then this business will fall away.



A Beijing crowd yesterday watches the Macau handover clock count down to the end of Portuguese rule. PHOTOGRAPH BY SOH CHAI HAN

The Portuguese governor has described it as a "political airport" where normal calculations don't apply. Like Hong Kong after it

returned to China, Macau will enjoy the benefits of the policy of "one country, two systems". The question is whether, freed from unimaginative colonial rule, Macau can develop a more successful system than those played on the gambling tables.



Liu Nianchun, who was freed on medical parole yesterday

Dissident exiled as another stands trial

John Gittings

China played the game of "one in one out" yesterday when it released a prominent dissident into exile in the United States, while preparing to put another on trial.

Liu Nianchun follows in the footsteps of fellow dissidents Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan, both released into exile in the past year.

Mr Liu, aged 50, was released from a prison labour camp on medical parole on condition that he left the country. He faces certain re-arrest if he returns.

Human rights groups have decried the timing of his release as a "symbolic" attempt to blunt criticism over the decision to put the veteran pro-democracy activist Xu Wenli on trial today.

Mr Liu was sentenced without trial under administrative regulations — often used to deal with dissenters — in 1995 after drafting a petition calling for an official inquiry into the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

It was the third time he had been imprisoned in 17 years. His three year term was then extended, again without trial.

His brother Lin Qing, who now lives in New York, said that Mr Liu had been ill for two years before being given a medical examination last month.

His wife, Chu Hailian, gained international publicity in September when she was dragged away by security guards while trying to deliver a letter to the United Nations human rights chief, Mary Robinson, outside a Beijing hotel.

Mr Liu, his wife and their 11-year-old daughter will arrive in the US only hours before Xu Wenli goes on trial in Beijing on charges of subversion.

Mr Xu attracted foreign attention when he was briefly detained while Tony Blair visited Beijing in September. Mr Blair's entourage suggested that the British Prime Minister may have helped secure Mr Xu's release. If so, it did not help him for long.

Mr Xu's wife, He Xintong, said yesterday that the court had appointed a lawyer for her husband without leaving him time to prepare a defence.

On Thursday two other leading dissidents — like Mr Xu accused of trying to set up an alternative to the Communist Party — were tried elsewhere in China without being allowed proper legal representation.

The three week-long crackdown on a handful of would-be founders of the Chinese Democracy Party (CDP) does not suggest real concern that they might pose a political threat. However, it reinforces recent forceful statements by national leaders intended to define the limits of dissent.

On Friday President Jiang Zemin told a meeting, held to celebrate the 20th anniversary of China's economic reforms, that the current political system "must not be shaken, weakened or discarded at any time". He vowed to "nip in the bud" any subversive activities.

The US-based Human Rights in China group welcomed Mr Liu's release yesterday. But in a statement it added: "The Chinese government continues to play hostage politics with no true commitment to international human rights standards."

China is also concerned with the overall balance of relations with the US and other Western democracies. In spite of Beijing's opposition to US bombing in Iraq, it must also take into account long-term trade and strategic shared interests.

Experience has shown that releasing one or two high-profile dissidents allows Western governments to claim that China is responding to human rights pressure.

News in brief

Israel sued over heart

THE family of a deceased Scottish tourist whose heart was removed and returned separately claimed yesterday that Israeli authorities returned the wrong organ.

The family of Alistair Sinclair is suing Israel for one million shekels (£145,000) for removing his heart and thyroid for medical tests without their permission.

Sinclair was arrested in Israel in April on suspicion of smuggling drugs. Police say he committed suicide the next day. His family claims he was killed. — AP Tel Aviv

Kosovo truce falters

ETHNIC Albanians attacked a police patrol yesterday in central Kosovo. Serb sources said, raising tensions after an upsurge of violence which threatens the province's fragile ceasefire.

The Serb Media Centre said ethnic Albanian separatists opened fire on a police patrol along the province's main east-west road about 25 miles west of Pristina.

Police fired back, wounding two attackers. They and four others were captured, the media centre said. Tension was running high in the province because the rebel Kosovo Liberation Army was burying 36 guerrillas killed by Yugoslav border guards, and hundreds of Serbs were protesting against the killing of a local official. — AP Pristina

Jewish grave attacked

UKNOWN assailants exploded a device at the German grave of the former chairman of the Central Council of Jews, destroying the memorial slab that covered Heinz Galinski's last resting place, police in Berlin said yesterday.

Police blocked off entry to the Jewish cemetery on Heer street in the Charlottenburg district to search for clues, after witnesses reported an explosion at the site on Saturday evening.

The German president, Roman Herzog, sent a telegram to Galinski's wife Ruth, in which he expressed his sadness and pain for himself and the Germans. The grave was attacked three months ago. — AP Berlin

Pupils expand protest

IGNORING pleas from the government, high school pupils vowed yesterday to step up their campaign to block roads and occupy schools to protest against plans to replace university exams with continual assessment. — AP Athens

Extortionist targets trains

SECURITY has been tightened on the German railways after an extortionist suspected of carrying out three attacks on trains demanded 10 million marks (about \$3 million), an interior ministry spokesman said yesterday.

Up to 400 border police will make checks on stretches of the railway and will be helped by their force, he said.

In the most serious attack a goods train was derailed on Friday. — AP Frankfurt

Israeli polls show public backing ex-army chief in fight for peace

Bene Frusther in Jerusalem

WHILE the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, looks for ways to keep his government afloat, Israelis have been focusing their attention on who might succeed him.

Israel's parliament votes today on whether to call new elections. Mr Netanyahu's cabinet yesterday backed his decision to freeze all moves to continue the peace process with the Palestinians until they fulfil a list of conditions.

Although the backing from his cabinet showed that he would probably survive a vote of no confidence in the Israeli parliament today, all analyses indicate that a majority of the 120 members will vote to hold early elections.

Centrist and leftwing Israelis have begun to debate who would present the greatest challenge to Mr Netanyahu: Ehud Barak, the leader of the opposition Labour party, or Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, a former soldier who has yet to decide on which party's ticket he would run.

Mr Netanyahu's move to solidify his rightwing support

was seen as a last-minute effort to regain the support he has lost from hardliners opposed to trading Israeli-occupied land in the West Bank in return for peace and security guarantees from the Palestinians.

But a majority of members of parliament appeared to be willing to vote against Mr Netanyahu. They comprise a mix of leftwingers, moderates fed up with stagnation in the peace process, and ultra-nationalists who have developed both an ideological and personal disdain for him.

In all, 85 of the 120 members are expected to vote for elections. Observers believe Mr Netanyahu may persuade a few members to abstain — or convince nationalists that his demise is only likely to hasten the election of a prime minister who will take a much more conciliatory stance with the Palestinians.

Even if the bill for elections passes, it will still have to be sent to a parliamentary committee before it is given its second and third readings. In that time the resilient Mr Netanyahu may broker a deal.

"This is looking to be more

dangerous than anything so far. We're still in the process, and he might by some miracle be able to defeat this," said Dr Reuven Hazan, a political scientist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

"But it looks like this is the beginning of the end and the question is, how long is the finale?"

Even if the call for elections succeeds, it is unlikely they

There are fears that if both men run they may split the peace vote

would take place before spring.

The foremost deadline in Israeli minds appears to be May 4 — when the five-year interim period of the Oslo Accords is scheduled to end and Yasser Arafat has said he will declare a Palestinian state with or without a final peace agreement.

Another matter that could hold back elections for several

months is that of the latest opinion polls. They show that General Lipkin-Shahak — who would have to sit through a 100-day waiting period after officially retiring from the army in order to run for office — is the favourite to beat Mr Netanyahu.

Gen Lipkin-Shahak has not yet announced that he will run but nor is he dispelling rumours that he will join the race.

Both challengers are protégés of Yitzhak Rabin, the Labour prime minister assassinated at a peace rally in 1995, and there are fears that, were both men to run, they could split the peace vote, handing victory to Mr Netanyahu.

Tensions are developing between the two as Mr Barak has indicated he will not surrender his leadership of the Labour party to Gen Lipkin-Shahak, who is a Labour sympathiser but also has the option of running as the head of a newly-formed centrist party.

"I'll be happy if he [Shahak] joins us," Mr Barak said, "[but] I am the one who leads us."

The general, aged 54, was appointed army chief of staff in 1995 by Yitzhak Rabin and helped with the Oslo Peace Accords as well as overseeing the transfer of most of the Gaza Strip and seven West Bank cities to Palestinian control.

During that time, the general expressed the need for Israel not to control the Palestinians. However, he has never outlined a platform or how he would negotiate a final settlement.



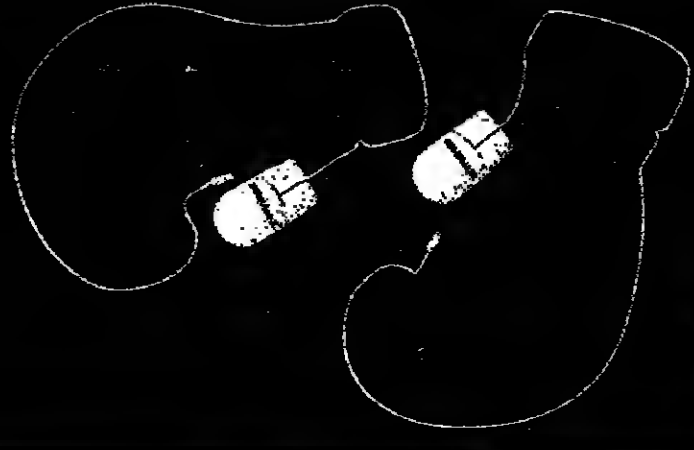
Front runner

LIEUTENANT-General Amnon Lipkin-Shahak (above) has never declared his intention to run for prime minister, but a recent poll showed him leading Benjamin Netanyahu as the people's choice by more than 15 points.

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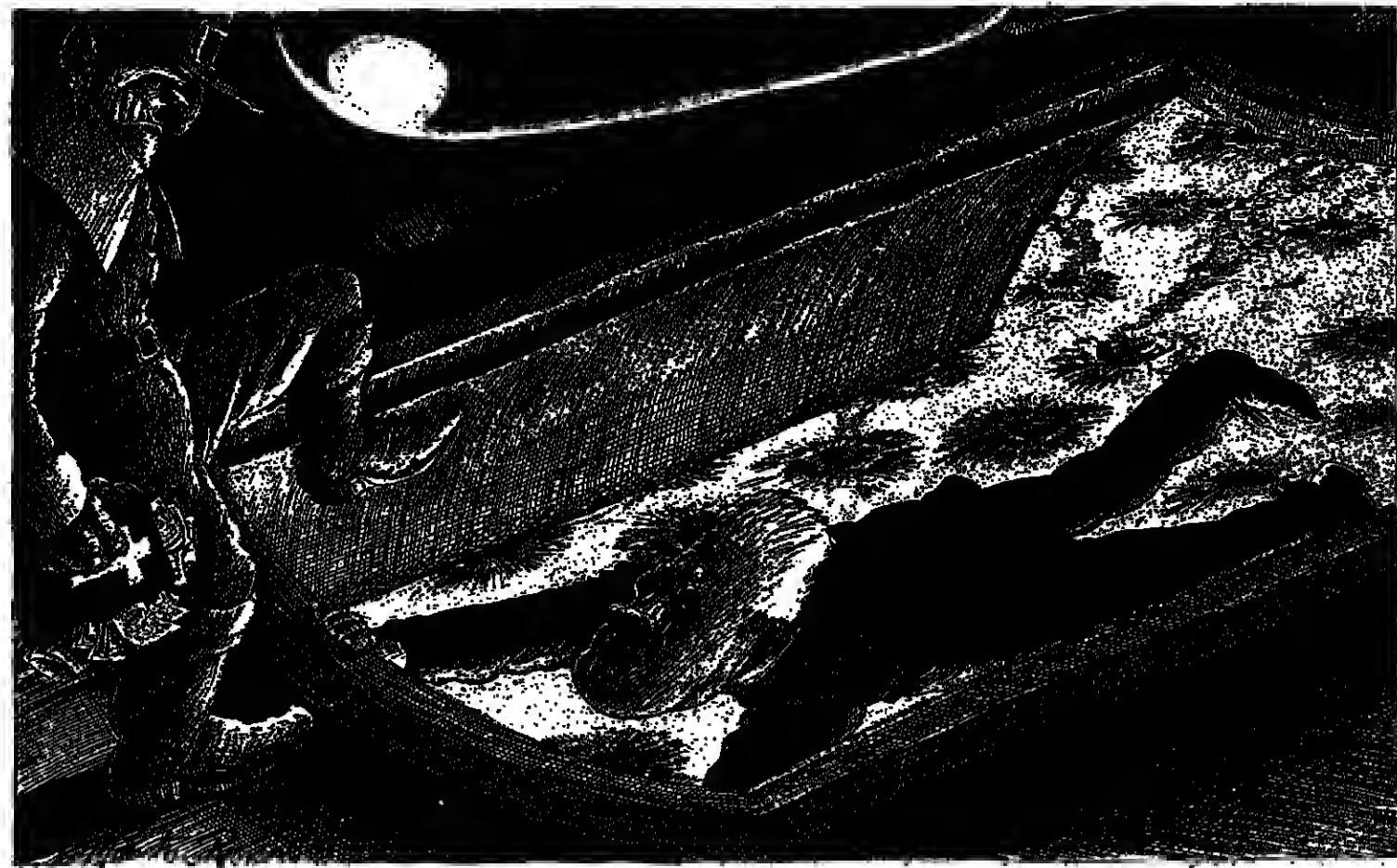
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Comment President impeached

Western sentiment is appalled at simultaneous warfare and arraignment in the US



To save this great country from the sectarians, Clinton must hold on

Peter Preston



THE VIEW from far beyond the Beltway is one of simple bemusement. What on earth do they think they're doing? The issue now isn't whether you approve of Bill Clinton or not, whether you'd welcome him as your son-in-law, but whether the hubbly of public life have been set lunatically high. The issue is Bob Livingston.

He was about to become the third most powerful man in the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives. But then, because marital straggles were the headlines of the moment, his own sidled into print — as they were bound to do if the focus was harsh enough. And he walked away from it all on the House floor. He threw in not merely the job he was destined for, but the job the people of Louisiana elected him to do.

The melodrama — ripe with unthinking folly — was challenging Clinton to do the same. The insanity was taking the narrow seam of sexual righteousness which has consumed the Republican Party and running it down through the ranks. In one deluded moment, Bob Livingston made infidelity a resigning offence.

In a Western world where as many marriages end in divorce as survive, that turns off the top of available talent. It would have denied the White House to Roosevelt, Eisenhower and Kennedy for starters. It would have buried Livingston's predecessor, Newt Gingrich, before his political career opened for business. You don't need to guess at its baleful impact on candidates to come. The questions for George Bush Junior and the rest are forming in reporters' notebooks already.

Let him who is absolutely without sin think of running; let everyone else go home and sit on their porch.

Was perjury the problem for Livingston? No, no court, no lies. Was abuse of power the problem? No, he hadn't got any, yet to abuse. The problem, the only problem, was sex outside marriage. We may or may not condone that, but whatever we think it is part of human existence. The man who might have been Speaker has made it the bottom line of running for public office now.

Such sexual McCarthyism is the ultimate madness: the moment to pause and take stock. Why have the Republicans behaved as they have? Don't they read opinion polls? Can't they absorb the message of the worst mid-term election performance in an equivalent point in a Presidency since the second world war?

Obviously not. Public opinion doesn't matter when there are no elections for two years. The opinion that counts is the din from the Christian coalitionists who've always hated Clinton. They aren't the moral majority; they are the moral minority. But they lobby and they care. For them, the technicalities of the American law of perjury are beside the point. They saw a fornicator with liberal credentials they didn't like elected; they think they've got him now. Forgiveness does not feature in their lexicon. Once the Senate starts sitting, they'll be picking up the phone again.

The reasons for wanting Clinton to survive have thus changed in turn. He was a grubby, pathological liar. He took his own mad risks and, when they were exposed, his political nous deserted him. He

lied to his nearest and (maybe) dearest. He cheated his staff and his friends. But there is still a line in the sand of his Presidency.

If Clinton is driven from office now, it will be because of his personal and private flaws — the flaws his wife and his daughter forgive him for. Livingston's departure makes that explicit. One extra-marital strike and you're out. That is a ludicrous rule of survival for a nation which neither lives by nor acknowledges such rules. It dictates, extrapolated, that their future chiefs shall not be people like them, but puritans wrapped in their own morality of self-regard.

THE PRESIDENT will not find it easy to resist the momentum is not with him. He's manifestly tired and beleaguered. His staff are disillusioned, his lawyers impaled on the hook of having to trade legal definitions — because the Senate is a court — while Senators demand quite other down home language. His economic miracle may not last much longer. His four days of sipping Iraq have made him few friends.

Above all, he's trapped in the impossible bind of damnation if he does something and damnation if he doesn't. Was the Baghdad foray a cynical bit of dog wagging? How could it be if his chiefs of staff and disapproving defence secretary advised him to send the missiles in? If he'd disregarded their advice, it would have leaked in this Washington within days. Equally if he'd told them to start bombing — against their advice — he would have been hung out to dry. Tony Blair is a friend in

need, not a poodle. Practically disinterested cynicism.

But practicality will also sit uneasily with perception through the coming weeks. In media legend, he's a broken President. If he does nothing, then he'll be prey to a "fatal inertia". If he apologises again it will be too little, too late; if he utters no more regrets then he will be treating the American people with contempt. He lacks, in sum, the ability to rescue himself. He will need something more.

Back to that line in the sand. Inside the Beltway, the media feeds on itself and the politicians feed on it. The hunt is getting close to the fox. The 24-hour newscasters will be there, live and portentous, if he's torn to pieces. The Republicans, drunk on their own altar wine, show no sign of humility. The call is for Clinton to depart as the only means of saving the nation from more of this ordeal.

But he cannot and should not depart. If he does, it will set the Livingston rule in stone. The fundamentalists will have their scalp. For runner of many victories to come — and America will benefit — draw its leaders from the narrow sect who are part, but only part, of a great country.

The last issue, in sum, is what kind of nation the United States may become. That's a long way from seedy suckings in the Oval Office, from sex, lies and videotapes, but it is where we are now. Who will rally of necessity to the defence of the indefensible? This devil of an affair has become bigger than any of us.

For in these dying days of 1998, the American capital has felt like a place in drastic trouble. At war with Iraq, at war with its President and at odds with the country it has begun to consume its own.

Washington has become the town that ate itself.

The first victim is, of course, the President, impeached on Saturday. Republicans were effective on the floor of the House that day arguing that Bill Clinton is guilty not of a sin, but a crime, not a private offence but a public one. He lied under oath to play by UN rules, if only for show, it will be harder in the future for the US to claim that its unilateral actions are taken on behalf of the world community.

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Ronald Steel is a professor of international relations at the University of Southern California

Bimbo bombings are the real crime

Barbara Ehrenreich



THE REPUBLICANS searched high and low — and then lower still — for some plausible excuse for impeachment. Ken Starr spent millions investigating Whitewater, Travelgate, Filegate, and even Vince Foster's suicide without uncovering a smoking gun or a smidgen of presidential DNA. Sadly for both the dignity of the nation and the credibility of the impeachment process, the Republicans were left with the President's schoolboyish attempts to pretend that nothing happened with Monica, at least nothing resembling sex.

But for at least a year now, a perfectly impeachable "high crime and misdemeanour" has been staring us in the face: Clinton's capricious use of US military power to upgrade his personal and political office help to Commander in Chief. Consider the timing of this year's threatened and actual military strikes:

● February 1998, directly following January revelations about his affair with Monica Lewinsky, Clinton readies the US military for an attack on Iraq, which is narrowly averted by the intervention of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

● August 1998, on the same day Ken Starr recalled Monica Lewinsky to testify to the grand jury, and days after his own dodgy testimony, Clinton launches air strikes against Sudan and Afghanistan (officially hitting Pakistan in the process). The strikes were justified by alleged links between Afghan-based Saudi

terrorist Osama bin-Laden and the bombings of US embassies in Africa, although no convincing evidence was adduced to show that the Sudan target was anything other than a pharmaceutical factory.

● November 1998, the weekend before Congress opens impeachment hearings, Clinton schedules a fresh bombing campaign against Iraq but, in a surprise case of *bellum inter-rumpus*, changes his mind.

● December 1998, on the eve of the congressional vote to impeach, Clinton begins the re-bombing of Iraq. This time he circumvents the UN entirely by beginning the attack even as the Security Council meets to discuss the UNSCOM report on weapons inspections — which report, it should be mentioned, admitted

He deserves impeachment for committing casual carnage

that the Iraqis had been cooperative at a "majority" of sites. Two hours after the impeachment vote, the bombing suddenly ceases.

Now the US Constitution, which impeachment hawk Representative Tom DeLay claims to carry in miniature, close to his heart at all times, says nothing about fellatio or fellatio-related fibbing. It does, however, make perfectly clear in Article I, Section 8, that only Congress has "the power to declare war" — a provision designed precisely to prevent a president's use of the public arsenal to achieve personal or political ends. On the basis of that and the UN charter, which prohibits the use of force by one nation against another without the authorisation of the Security Council, legal scholars Francis Boyle and Julian Lebel maintain that Clinton indeed deserves impeachment — not for casual sex but for what could be argued is equally casual carnage.

Yet, bizarrely, Congress persisted in its effort to impeach the President on manifestly trivial grounds, pausing only to declare its fervent bipartisan support for the troops. Never mind that scores of Iraqi civilians were dying, or that among the collateral damage from the Republicans' sexual purity crusade were veteran adulterers — Hyde and Livingston — on their own side of the aisle. Even those House members who profess to disbelieve the President when he offers the time of day swallowed his bombing rationales like candy. The wagging dog has become America's elephant in the living room — the presence that almost everyone is too polite to mention.

Call it blood magic — the mysterious power of war to mobilise the emotions at the expense of the most elementary logic. Mindful of its drug-like effects, opportunistic heads of state have spent the last two decades refashioning war into a public relations device: Thatcher in the Falklands, Milosevic in Bosnia, Bush in Iraq. In each case, a leader emboldened by low popularity and a faltering economy was able to boost his or her ratings to god-like levels, at least temporarily, by staging a war. Ancient rulers cemented their power by presiding over public rites of blood sacrifice, and American governors seek a similar effect by demonstrating their enthusiasm for capital punishment. Recall, for example, candidate Clinton's effort to distract from Gennifer Flowers' revelations with his highly publicised 1992 execution of a severely retarded Arkansas man.

So the impeachment process continues for all the wrong reasons. As the tawdry spectacle unfolds in the Senate, the American people will squeal in self-pity: the Iraqis will bury their dead, and residents of designated target states everywhere — from Cuba to North Korea — will be well advised to dig their bomb shelters a little bit deeper.

Barbara Ehrenreich is the author of *Blood Filter: Origins and History of the Passions of War* (Vintage)

Senate must rescue the US constitution

Jonathan Freedland in Washington DC

THE WASHINGTON Monument, that sharp needle that pops out of the skyline of America's capital, is not looking so good just now. It's clad in scaffolding from top to bottom, necessary for some mid-winter repairs. And it makes an unsettling sight.

For one thing, it could be a cartoonist's depiction of Washington's 1998 obsession with sex. The bolt-upright monument has always had a phallic provenance; now it looks like it's sheathed in a condom. But there's a less crude reading. The sight of a national landmark propped up by poles and planks is a sign of the current mood of the city: Washington is falling down.

In these dying days of 1998, the American capital has felt like a place in drastic trouble. At war with Iraq, at war with its President and at odds with the country it has begun to consume its own.

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What's been achieved?

And what happens now?

THE PRIME Minister urges us to feel "safer". The bombing has stopped and Saddam is pronounced weakened. It's a proposition that has literally to be true, even if only a fraction of the British and American bombs and missiles hit their targets. This is the "degradation" promised last Wednesday, which by official reports will take years to replace.

But who really feels safer? It's not just the person in the street's questions about the relative invulnerability of chemical and biological weapons. Iraqi civilians are hardly more secure, facing as they do both intensified sanctions together with (no paradox according to the Foreign Secretary) new efforts to deliver humanitarian aid. How many more will have to die, either at Saddam's hands or in pursuit of a strategy that calls for peace? The anxiety is global, too. During the past week the pent uncertainties of the post-Cold War world have exploded along with bombs in Baghdad, unleashing profound doubts about the American order that has replaced bi-

polar freeze. For some it has been the way in which the language of international legality has been used when what we are witnessing is the assertion of the interests of the United States, interests with which we and the Russians and Chinese are of course more or less complicit. American self-absorption makes things worse. Here is a super power projecting military force half way around the globe in a fit of absence of mind. Some world order, when Russian diplomacy consists in large measure of petulance and Europe, not for the first time, is characterised by confusion and non-communication. As for the United Nations, cynosure still of so many hopes, Secretary-General Kofi Annan has lost authority. Uncom's personnel and mission are clouded; it hardly helps for the Government to start insinuating there wasn't much Uncom could tell us that signals intelligence and remote sensing can't. As for the Security Council, it is hard to see if and when it can function again as an embryonic world governing body. It seems oddly late in the game for the prime minister to talk about achieving a broad consensus in it. The prevailing sense of insecurity has been compounded by the war's disproportions. If the end game is replacing Saddam, the connection between bombs and the convoluted politics of that transition is less obvious. Yesterday Foreign and Defence Secretaries were on parade. Shouldn't the

Chancellor have been out front too. How much extra money (at what cost to the Government's domestic commitments) will this "advanced" role for the United Kingdom in the Gulf really amount to. Did the 1998 defence review really prepare British taxpayers to assume global policeman's responsibilities?

Money is not the only cost of Operation Desert Fox. The Foreign Secretary talks of building new partnerships, after the event. It's not to be a little Englander to point out that the commercial and security interests of other countries are as engaged with the Middle East and the Gulf and the fact that Britain was the colonial power on the Euphrates ought to be the reason for more not less involvement by other powers. Tony Blair talks of the fallacy of saying, if you can't remove Saddam then there is nothing to be done. But what's to be done must involve much more than military action. One reason why President Clinton's inactivity is so unfortunate is that there is now even less likelihood of defining security in the Middle East in the only way that makes long-term sense, that is by including Israel as part of the disequilibrium and part-solution: for President Clinton in one and the same week to appear at Gaza, offering something like a new start and then to resort to unilateral action in another Arab state is only to register the scale of the lost opportunity.

Tony Blair has lately worn the clothes of leadership with some style, carefully avoiding Thatcherite triumphalism. But the glamorous, cameras-outside-Number-Ten phase is ending. He has a new battle to fight — to convince Britain is committing to a long-term anomalous forward-offensive role. What is the point?

Don't impeach him

The issue is proportionality

BILL Clinton, the first president this century to be impeached by Congress, has promised to fight on until "the last hour of the last day" of his term. Is he right to resist the Republican onslaught? Absolutely. A Senate trial may paralyse an already benumbed and debilitated White House, but Republican hardliners are posing a far greater constitutional threat to the US than the discredited incumbent. Impeachment is not an impeachable offence. Indeed, as yet another congressional figure, speaker-elect Bob Livingston, resigned following revelations of his infidelity, even the man who presided over the house judiciary committee's impeachment hearings, Henry Hyde, somewhat belatedly warned members not to confuse private acts with "the conduct of public office".

Precisely, but why did it take the exposure of sins within Republican ranks to establish this fundamental political principle? There is indeed a sexual McCarthyism developing in America which is as insidious and, in its way, as damaging as the witchhunt for communists four decades ago.

Clinton has in many ways been a serious disappointment. The hopes he engendered at the beginning of his first term for a fairer society evaporated as he embraced the Republican agenda to win his second term. But this too is not an impeachable offence. Future historians will undoubtedly heap condemnation on his head, but they will save their most serious censure for a Republican majority in the lower house, which used its sheer numbers to push through its partisan impeachment vote. Clinton has, of course, dissembled and lied. The question is one of proportionality: should he be impeached as president or prosecuted for perjury once he has left office? His offences surely fall short of the "high crimes and misdemeanours" required for an impeachment. Censure him now and prosecute him later, by all means, but the Senate must step back from the grave step of impeachment.

Letters to the Editor

Councillors taking the rise

[CANNOT believe that Westminster Council is proposing to make payments to those involved in the "homes for votes" scandal (Council shelves pay-offs, December 18). I was made redundant by the council in 1988 and accepted the terms then offered — only to be told five years later that a mistake had been made and my pension was reduced by over £1,000 a year. The compensation I was offered, after long negotiations by Unison, was somewhat less than the £165,000 you report being offered to Barry Legg or the £1 million put aside for Shirley Porter. Nova Atkinson, Woking.

WHEN people criticise the rise in the BBC licence fee (News in brief, December 18) they should also consider the happily accepted profit margins enjoyed by the consumer industries that buy advertising time in private sector broadcasting. By comparison, £100 per annum for the BBC's services offers exemplary value for money compared to the amounts accrued from us by the chiefs of the major financial investors involved in independent television. Julia Firth, London.

WHAT were your readers supposed to understand by the reference in your leader (December 19) to "the German notion" of a "law of nations"? The German for "international law", is "Völkerrecht", a straight translation of the long established term "jus gentium", or as it appears in that classic text by the late J.L. Brierley, *The Law of Nations*. Characteristically one might judge your remark unworthy of your newspaper. D.J. Bentley, London.

SO association with an organisation which seeks to advance the cause of human rights law is regarded as a form of bias on the part of a judge (Pinochet ruling set aside by Lords, December 18). Remarkable given the attitude which has been taken by the judiciary towards Freemasonry. Dr Trevor Carnow, Lancaster.

Battle rages over Iraq

HOW do we know what really happened in Iraq? We got an official account from the government of Britain and the United States. But they were the attackers and concerned to justify their aggression. We got journalists' accounts from Baghdad. But — as they themselves rightly pointed out — they were under Iraqi control and allowed to see only what the Iraqi government wanted them to see. Since our only two sources were therefore tainted, Operation Desert Fox looks like qualifying as the most poorly-reported war since 1914-18. Phillip Knightley, London.

IF Kofi Annan has one iota of self-respect, he should resign his post as UN Secretary-General. It is not sufficient for him just to describe the illegal military action taken by the US and Britain against Iraq as a sad day for the UN. For four days he set light to the bombs and missiles rained on Iraq. It is now clear why Western superpowers favour candidates from the developing world to fill the post of UN Secretary-General. They are easily bypassed and seem to ignore insults while clinging to the trappings of office. Even someone like Richard Butler found it easy to side-line Annan and to confer with US representatives at the UN instead, when it came to the withdrawal of the Uncom inspectors from Baghdad. He obviously knows where the real power lies. In the current world climate, the UN is in urgent need of reform in order to regain its credibility. In its present form we have to ask whether such an impotent and easily manipulated organisation is worth retaining. Dr Peter Kandela, Staines, Middx.

YOUR correspondent (December 18) makes the highly pertinent observation that numerous letters have objected to our air strikes, but virtually all fail to propose a credible alternative. Mr Tossell claims that the action is called for and what should that be? Let me suggest a less damaging alternative. Do nothing. There is no obvious reaction to the infuriating dilemmas as presently posed

by Saddam. But the dilemmas are (for those other than the Iraqi population) merely infuriating. Demands for action simply because Saddam's regime is so deeply and infuriatingly a prescription for disaster — and Britain is now compounding, in the most horrible fashion, the misery already imposed on the Iraqis by their leader and by UN sanctions. A do nothing policy does not appear heroic, but the Government's and your correspondent's mantra that some action is called for is a simplistic and dangerous one — just ask the civilians who are having tons of explosive poured on them by the hubristic and gung-ho politicians. Dr Gerald de Lacey, London.

THE left of the Labour Party never miss an opportunity to criticise their government. Given that there is general agreement that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction, they offer no constructive alternative to the way in which the Government has acted; the left haven't said what they would do. Surely even they don't believe you can negotiate with such an evil dictator? Perhaps they can tell us why Saddam is stockpiling weapons if it's not to use them in the future. After all he's killed and maimed innocent people in the past in his own country and in Kuwait. Eric Mandel, Malmesbury, Wiltshire.

MY concern is the attitude of the Iraqi population. I am German-born and remember well enough from the second world war how, under the perception of foreign occupation and in isolation, the people rally round their leader, because he is all they have got. Military action against a nation won't bring the fall of their leader any nearer. On the contrary, the US and UK governments take it upon themselves to single out one cruel, treacherous and power-hungry leader before the many others whose deeds make no nicer reading than Saddam's. Mariaanne Peters, Manchester.

ONCE there was a quaint, old fashioned political theory called balance of power. With the collapse of the Soviet Union what is to be done now to restrain the military juggernaut that America has become? The UN Secretary is insulted; the Security Council treated with contempt. China and Russia protest in vain. The Clinton-Blair alliance is suffocatingly smug and repressive in its complacency. Don Feasey, Manchester.

MARTIN Bell's rhetorical question as to who appointed us and the United States to act as the world's deputy and chief sheriffs (I'd shoot the sheriff and his deputy too, December 19) is inapt. The bombing of Iraq was a grim necessity precisely because no sheriff exists; there is no supranational organisation that exercises supreme and acknowledged sovereignty among states. It is, moreover, undesirable that any such authority should exist, for democracy is strongest when it embodies local tradition and custom. In any case, would order the United Nations acts as an international — not supranational — body that can authorise its members to use force, but does not use force itself. Iraq has demonstrated its lack of interest in peace in Germany and for indigenous rights worldwide. Your readers should be aware of Philip Stoll's work between Two Armies in which he used a similar technique of interviews to justify the theses that

the guerrilla movement in Guatemala was as responsible for the Mayan genocide of the early 1980s as the Guatemalan army. These interviews were with the people who had stayed in the Guatemalan villages, ignoring those who had gone into exile or the fact that a different opinion might have been given to the tens of thousands who were killed. We should all be wary of the use of anthropology to promote a rather skewed ideological vision of the Guatemalan tragedy. Giampiero Alhadeff, Secretary general, Solidar, Belgium.



Straw is wrong on terrorism law

THE new proposals by the Government to extend the remit of the terrorism laws (Straw broadens law against terrorism, December 18) have a number of dangerous consequences. One of these is the government suggestion that the law on "proscription" might be extended beyond terrorism relating to Northern Ireland. Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act it is a criminal offence to be a member of certain organisations that have been proscribed by the Government. Liberty believes that only actions should be subject to criminal sanctions and imprisonment, not mere indications of support or involvement in political organisations: freedom of expression and assembly are too important in any democratic society to be eroded in this way. Under the general law it is already a criminal offence to aid and abet another to commit an offence. It is notoriously difficult for the police to obtain evidence

of membership of proscribed organisations because such organisations rarely have membership lists. When it rushed through more terrorism legislation in the summer, the Government "solved" this problem by ensuring that the police no longer need any evidence to convict individuals of this offence. The mere opinion of a police officer combined with a refusal to answer police questions is now sufficient. This is a significant departure from our traditional criminal justice system.

The idea that this law should be extended is shocking. There is a danger that it will make criminals of those who campaign for democracy or human rights abroad. There is also a risk that animal rights or anti-roads campaigners will commit a crime merely by associating with members of a group which the Home Secretary has proscribed. John Wadham, Director, Liberty.

Liberal attack

SADLY, it is not the first time that Nobel Laureate Rigoberta Menchú has come under attack in the liberal press (News in brief, G2, December 18). You ignored two fundamental points. Rigoberta Menchú did not receive the Nobel Prize for her book. She spent many years in exile working for peace in Guatemala and for indigenous rights worldwide. Your readers should be aware of Philip Stoll's work between Two Armies in which he used a similar technique of interviews to justify the theses that

the guerrilla movement in Guatemala was as responsible for the Mayan genocide of the early 1980s as the Guatemalan army. These interviews were with the people who had stayed in the Guatemalan villages, ignoring those who had gone into exile or the fact that a different opinion might have been given to the tens of thousands who were killed. We should all be wary of the use of anthropology to promote a rather skewed ideological vision of the Guatemalan tragedy. Giampiero Alhadeff, Secretary general, Solidar, Belgium.

Leni Riefenstahl continues to be a focus of controversy

THE point of Leni Riefenstahl is a simple one — either you have a taste for fascist aesthetics or you don't (Letters, December 19). It pains me to note that Kevin Brownlow, easily one of cinema's greatest historians, apparently has such a taste and is prepared to defend the indefensible in consequence. Riefenstahl's Tiedland, to which he refers, was made using Roman extras from a holding camp in Austria who were all returned to the concentration camp system after filming. Most of them did not survive. This sort of incident constitutes the case for her Nazi complicity.

But what is equally important is that Tiedland is also one of the worst movies ever made, beyond camp in its turpidity. Its quality alone, even without the evil that lurks behind it, is quite enough to justify the end of her career as a film director. But she should never have worked as a director at all. All this rubbish about her genius really ought to stop. Multiple cameras on the major documentaries reduce her "auteurist" claims to editing, and there we find that the concept of "endless repetition" takes on a new meaning. In *Triumph of the Will*, for example, 17 minutes of march past is followed by umpteen minutes of another march past.

But don't worry, the endless speeches covertly justifying

Hitler's "Night of the Long Knives", when the SA leadership was destroyed, are yet to come. And then there's going to be lots more marching. Of course, pointing a camera at hundreds of thousands of men in close formation yields images fascinating to the fascist in all of us; but from the film-making point of view it really isn't that hard. In fact, how could you fail? Although she does come close because of her complete inability to pace her material, Riefenstahl was never a member of the Nazi Party. But that is because Goebbels' preference was for all artists to pretend to independence.

The notion that she in any way resisted the regime is ludicrous. She is now the world's most prominent unrepentant Nazi, a focus for far-right-wing enthusiasts. Unlike Ingmar Bergman (whom Brownlow cites), she has never disclaimed her connection with Hitler. On the contrary, it is distressing to find Kevin Brownlow in the company of her apologist, Prof Brian Winston, School of Communications Westminster University.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used. Please provide a reference to the relevant article.

Royal stitch-up

David McKie



RIGHT-THINKING people must all be greatly relieved that the future of the House of Lords is to be settled not by the machinations of power-hungry politicians but by one of the great and the good, a royal commission. Where politicians are by nature self-serving, royal commissions are elevated and detached. What purer proof can you find than the fact that Margaret

Thatcher did not appoint a single royal commission, for fear that one might come up with answers she did not like? So out of the prize now announced is bound to come the best devisable blueprint for a 21st-century second chamber.

Perhaps. When you look at the record of royal commissions and their slightly less eminent cousins, departmental commissions of inquiry, a rather less spotless pattern emerges. Some such inquiries — particularly under Harold Wilson, who used them a lot — were clearly contrived to produce the answers which ministers had already arrived at. Wilson set up the Fulton committee on the civil service and gave it 12 members, but its composition was probably best described as Norman (later Lord) Crompton Hunt and 11 others.

Hunt was a Wilson confidant; he was the only full-time member of the team; he, along

with the secretary, wrote the report. Three years later Richard Crossman set up a committee on one-parent families under a lawyer called Morris Finer who he thought would swiftly arrive at the "obvious" answer — is the one he favoured himself. Soon Crossman began to complain about the time Finer was taking. The inquiry lasted almost five years and by the time it reported Crossman was dead.

Not every attempt to do this succeeds. Margaret Thatcher set up a departmental committee on the BBC, entrusting the chairmanship to a staunch free-marketeer. When its membership was announced, one Thatcherite backbencher so far forgot himself as to proclaim in the House that the choice of this chairman ensured it would reach the correct solution: ie broadcasting would be Thatcherised. But it didn't. More recently the Benham Commission on local government was vigorously pointed towards the abo-

lition of county councils and a system of unitary authorities. But Sir John was also told to consult public opinion, which turned out not to like this idea. In the end, nearly all the counties survived.

OTHER commissions seem genuinely to have been put there to resolve knotty issues that politics could not settle. The Roskill Commission on the third London airport, following the logic of its evidence, favoured an island site at Cublington, Bucks, and rejected a dashing plan to site it on Maplin Sands on the Essex coast. Roskill had earlier targeted three inland sites — the others were at Nuthampstead, Herts, and Thurleigh, Beds. All would have blighted traditional Conservative country. One day a senior government minister was preparing to open a golf course in one of the stricken areas when one of the local MPs halted him in

mid-swing. "You realise," he said, "that if you build the third airport here, all of this will be lost?" The statesman lowered his club. "Won't happen," he confided. "Too many marginal seats at stake." The Conservatives rejected Roskill and went for an airport on Maplin Sands, where marginal seats would be less of a problem since half of the threatened area would be under the sea.

That is the trouble with politically innocent commissions. What you get when you try to build something elevated and detached is too often a castle in the air. The Jenkins committee on voting reform, which was charged with selecting the best alternative system to First Past the Post was much more grubbily pragmatic. It tailored its recommendations to the known proclivities of the Labour and Liberal Democrat leaderships and to what might be got through the Commons. It's a sign of the

sedation of the British political system since Blair that the way the Jenkins process evolved hasn't been more complained about than the

So perhaps one should not dismiss out of hand a complaint in last Wednesday's *Daily Telegraph* from the former Conservative leader in the Lords, Lord Cranborne, that Tony Blair favoured an upper chamber which was four-fifths nominated, and the royal commission he'd promised might be tilted towards that solution. I hope that his assessment of Blair's aspirations, for which Cranborne provided no evidence, is a monstrous canny.

On the other hand, he has just been engaged in all those clandestine contacts which led to the deal that caused William Hague to sack him, and he must have heard a thing or two there. At the very least, this needs watching. You can't be too careful, such things have happened before.

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Sir Alan Hodgkin

The Nobel art of science

Sir Alan Hodgkin, who has died aged 94, was a scientist of unusual breadth, a Nobel Laureate in physiology and medicine, a physicist and biochemist, and an innovator in the electronics of measurement. As a quietly influential Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, as president of the Royal Society and, for 13 years, as Chancellor of the University of Leicester, he was also among the most effective scientific administrators of our time.

Tall, reticent, profound, exacting yet good humoured, still handsome and distinctly patrician even in old age, he was warmed by a touch of constitutionalism, by the full breadth of culture, and by true imagination. He detested humbug, pretence and ritual, yet was always polite, even in extreme circumstances and even to investigative journalists. He expressed both his Quaker upbringing and the influence of his family, one of the most notable in Britain for its personalities, scholarship and mild eccentricity.

Sir Alan shared the 1963 Nobel Prize with his one-time student, collaborator and life-time friend Andrew Huxley. Between them, they unravelled the complex sub-millisecond electro-chemical underlying the transmission of impulses along neural fibres. That a share of the prize also went to the Australian physiologist John Eccles, who, in the 1930s, had strongly opposed new theories, was seen by some scientists as a matter of controversy.

Two fundamental issues were involved. Before the 1930s the nervous system was regarded as a hard-wired network, in which neural pulses were entirely electrical, travelling along fibres and across neural junctions, the synapses, as in a conductor.

In the 1930s, against the opposition of Eccles, among others, Henry Dale and his colleagues demonstrated that transmission across the synapses is chemical (the release of acetylcholine). As a post-graduate student Sir Alan recalled hearing, this issue debated vigorously at Cambridge by Dale and Eccles, and, in the end, coming down firmly on Dale's side. "Eccles," he wrote later, "put up a good defence, but acetylcholine won the day." This was a controversy, however, in

which Hodgkin never became involved, for his work was concerned with neural axons, not synapses. In any case the Cambridge of the early 1930s, when he was a student, seethed with scientific ideas and controversies. This was the era of Rutherford, Eddington, Hardy, J J Thompson (Master of Trinity), G. I. Taylor, Wigglesworth, Stein, Adrian, Needham and many others of the front rank. It is striking that, even in this context, Hodgkin was a brilliant student, one who loved Cambridge as intensely as he had disliked much of his early schooling. It seems, in retrospect, almost inevitable that decades later, and amid international acclaim, he would be able to so arrange his life as to become Master of Trinity.

Scholarship was the family trait. Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin, who won the Physics Nobel Prize in 1964 for her x-ray diffraction studies of proteins, was his cousin. His

This advance is fundamental to understanding our nervous system and the biochemistry of diseases. It won him a Nobel Prize

grandfather was Thomas Hodgkin, a leading historian during the 19th century and a man who loved Northumberland. For several years he lived with his family in the unrenowned keep of Bamburgh Castle — until the Sitwell family rented them their castle at Barmston.

The connections are deep-rooted. His father, George, was the nephew of the historian's namesake — Dr Thomas Hodgkin, the physician and anatomist who pioneered the use of the stethoscope in Britain, and who, in the 1840s, described the form of lymphatic cancer now universally called Hodgkin's Disease. With laughter persistently threatening to break through the Quaker facade, this circle and background was one of

extreme talent and critical good humour. By diffusion and hard work — and in spite of the premature death of his father in India during the first world war — it ensured that Alan went up from Gresham School to Cambridge on a scholarship. He had already determined to focus on scientific research.

Sir Alan's father had been unable to study medicine because of eye problems and, in default, practised civil and marine engineering. Although it is not recorded, there seems little doubt that he hoped that Alan would become a physician. But when Alan went up to Cambridge for interview he was already thinking of a future in physiology and biochemistry. He became surprised, on acceptance, to be advised to spend as much time as he could on physics and mathematics. Years later he said that, although it was difficult, he took this advice seriously and it proved to be of crucial importance to his career.

He turned out to be very good at both, which explains why, at the outbreak of the second world war, he was quickly roped in by the government's scientific adviser, Frederick Lindemann (Viscount Cherwell), to take part in the development of airborne radar. Over the next few years he worked alongside Hanbury Brown, Bernard Lovell, Taffy Bowens and others in the sometimes dangerous, sometimes triumphant, but always stressed and often gloomy secret war of the air.

Since he was already working on neural transmission it might be thought he should have been roped in to develop countermeasures for nerve gases. But at this time neither Britain nor America knew that German scientists had, by accident, come across the first nerve agents in 1937, and that these were already being stockpiled for military use. The Germans, mistakenly and fortunately for the Allies, believed that Britain already had them and therefore were afraid of massive reprisals had they used them.

Since Alan Hodgkin was a dedicated Quaker, his involvement in military research of any kind requires explanation. He had spent a lot of time with family friends in Germany in the 1930s learning the language, which was essential for anyone studying science. His first-hand experiences of the Nazi regime, its



Hodgkin... being installed as Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1963

brutal oppression of minorities and phoney genetics, led him to set aside his Quaker pacifism in 1939.

That the wartime years occupy almost a third of his autobiography, *Chance and Design*, with its detail of successive airborne radar designs, reveals their importance to him. These were the years which buttressed his understanding of physics and electronics, and somehow defined his future. In 1944, after a transatlantic pursuit of several years, Marlon

"Marni" Rous, daughter of an American academic, met him at Cambridge well, agreed to marry him. This was, and throughout his life remained, a marriage of extraordinary importance and power. This was also the period during which he determined to continue the line of research already started with Andrew Huxley and which, 20 years later, would result in the Nobel Prize.

These studies of the nature of nerve impulses called for measurements of the differ-

ence in electrical potential between the inside and outside of a single nerve fibre and were at the limits of physics and electronics. Hodgkin began the studies on his own in the mid-1930s, using single axons from the common shore crab, whose nerve fibres have a diameter of two to three microns (thousandths of a millimetre). Through a Rockefeller grant awarded on the basis of his fellowship thesis, he went first to New York and then to Woods Hole Laboratory where

he met and worked with K S Cole, then leading the world in the techniques needed for such studies.

Hodgkin's recollections of this pre-war journey to the US — crossing the Atlantic on board the USS Manhattan in the company of his beautiful friend Phyllis Gull, a fellow post-graduate student with a large following of admirers at Trinity known collectively as the Phyllistines — reads like a chapter from Agatha Christie. Phyllis and Alan had shared family holidays and he somehow felt that he had won her. But the beautiful Phyllis was unwell on arrival in New York, went straight off to Canada, and promptly married somebody else — leaving him in some distress. There were clear rewards however. Phyllis was a violinist who stimulated Alan's lifelong interest in music, and this was the trip on which he met and fell in love with Marni.

In the meantime, under Cole, he learned how to dissect giant axons from the squid, fibres which are about 50 times the diameter of those of the crab, and hence much easier to handle and study.

With this expertise and, thanks to Cole, much better measuring equipment, he had been able to assemble at Cambridge, Hodgkin returned to Britain in 1939 and, in August, began the collaborative experiments with Huxley. Although stopped by the war almost before they had started, the work was picked up again in 1945, when Huxley became assistant research director of the department of physiology at Cambridge.

The central questions in his own research were how do neural signals travel along the fibre; how is the electrical potential produced, and are any existing theories right? Hodgkin discovered that the electrical impulses travelling along nerve fibres have a peak potential greater than the resting potential difference between the inside and outside of the fibre, which is a kind of biochemical "battery" produced by storage of potassium ions.

This eliminated the most favoured theory of the time, that the pulse was simply a travelling "permeability leak" — a "short" — between the inside and outside of the fibre. Using equipment which

in some ways derived from the radar days (and which, coupled with improved understanding of nerve signals, has subsequently formed the basis of much medical diagnostic equipment) Hodgkin and Huxley magnified single axon impulses a million-fold. They displayed these signals, stretched out in time, on cathode ray tubes. In parallel they studied the sub-millisecond electrical biochemistry going on inside the fibre. Their techniques stretched the limits of technical possibility.

Yet, by the mid-1950s, they were able to demonstrate beyond doubt that nerve impulses employ elegant and extremely rapid electrochemistry, involving the complementary movements of both potassium and sodium ions, which, in sequence, achieve a very brief electrical pulse of unexpected high potential.

This advance, although seemingly isolated and remote, is fundamental to understanding not only the way our nervous system works, but in the study of the underlying biochemistry of diseases involving neural malfunction. It won them a Nobel Prize.

Sir Alan was Royal Society Foulerton Research Professor at Cambridge from 1962-69, professor of biophysics from 1970-81 and president of the Royal Society from 1970 to 1975. Most of his life was spent in Cambridge, at the Downing Street laboratories of which his love, in a complex way, was indistinguishable from his love and involvement in the drive and spirit of the university and in that of his family and home in nearby Panton Street.

He was a profound student of nature, an ornithologist, a traveller and communicator, and, above all, a man of great intellect, compassion and sensibility. Marni gave him three daughters and a son, Jonathan Alan, who studied science at Cambridge, worked there as a molecular biologist and who in 1980 was appointed a fellow of the Royal Society. As Sir Alan might have said, family traditions really matter.

Anthony Tucker

Sir Alan Lloyd Hodgkin, scientist, born February 5, 1914; died December 20, 1998

Anthony Tucker completed this obituary shortly before his own death

Norman Adcock

Italian soccer's true Brit hero

NORMAN ADCOCK, who has died aged 78, was the first British footballer to play professionally in post-war Italy. A prolific goal scorer as centre-forward for Padova, Triestina and, ultimately, Treviso, he might have risen still higher with Milan. The powerful Milanese club approached him during his most successful season, in 1947-48, when his goals helped Padova to promotion from Serie B to Serie A. "They asked me how much I wanted," Adcock recalled, "I replied, £4,000. Milan agreed."

The idea was that Adcock would operate at centre-forward between two former Arsenal players, Paddy Stann, an Irish international, and the Icelandic — and later government minister — Albert Gudmundsson. These two both joined Milan in the summer of 1948 but Padova officially protested that Adcock had been tapped during the season. After an inquiry the Italian League president ruled that Adcock would officially become a Milan player — but would stay with Padova on loan for the following season.

Alas for Adcock, Milan then signed the formidable Swedish international centre-forward, Gunnar Nordahl, later enrolling his equally gifted compatriots, Gunnar Gren and Nils Liedholm to form the illustrious so-called *Grande tria*. So Adcock moved on to Triestina, then a top division club, under the management of a celebrated coach, the Trieste-born Nereo Rocco, who took Adcock with him to Treviso when he went there in 1950. "We got on



Adcock... all his own work

well," said Adcock, "with many laughs. If I satisfied Nereo, I hadn't done so bad." He started when stationed in Padua with the British Army. He played several times on the Padova Stadium and so impressed their president that he asked Adcock to join the club when he was demobilised. His league debut was made for them at home in Serie B on November 17, 1946, against Cremonese. He struggled for weeks but eventually started scoring goals. Padova gave him a two-season contract with a signing on fee of £50,000. A generous "escape" allowed him to leave at the end of season 1947-48, receiving 50 percent of any transfer fee. Padova came second that season, top the next, and were promoted.

"The city went wild," remembered Adcock, who was the leading scorer of Serie B. "I did not realise at the time I was such a good player. To think that one Englishman, surrounded by Italians, had made it on his own, and learnt the language with them."

Italian fans have much

longer memories than their English equivalents. In Padua, Adcock was never forgotten and went back to Italy two or three times a year. "I'm more popular now than when I was playing. I'm treated like royalty. There is not another country in the world where, after 50 years, they would remember you with such affection, and still ask for your autographs. The youths are with their fathers, who tell them who I was. I'm speechless at times. With the Veneto public, they will not let me pay for anything. Their generosity is out of this world. It's the same every time I go there. When I complain they say 'friendship means more to us than anything'. There is no answer to that."

Adcock insisted he did everything on his own. He had no agent. His sole ambition was to be a professional footballer, achieved for himself and for his mother, who had been widowed when he was 10.

When he returned to England he saw the tail-end of his career with the then non-league Peterborough United, retiring in 1983. He returned to his birthplace at Boston, Lincolnshire, where he lived a tranquil and comfortable life with his wife. Obscure in England, so well remembered in Padua, his honourable career in Italy might have been better still, had he only managed to join Milan.

Brian Glenville

Norman Adcock, footballer, born February 21, 1923; died December 8, 1998

A Country Diary

THE LAKE DISTRICT: Cloudless blue skies and dazzling December sunshine over most of Lakeland, except for the 10-mile trough of Windermere shrouded in impenetrable fog. We were crossing the lake by the ferry on our way to a walk over Claife Heights and were grateful that the ferryman doesn't have to steer, since, nowadays, the draft hauls itself across on cables. The few contours to Far Sawrey on the far shore, were enough to lift us up into the sunshine again and the familiar walk past the tarns seemed especially delightful. Moss Easles Farm, mirror-calm, with swans and many other water fowl, and Wise Ben Tarn and the Langdale and Conistone heights spread across the sky. Years ago, there was little or nothing to see because of the crowded profusion of the trees: nowadays, so enthusiastic has been the felling, you can look down the length of Windermere and across most of southern Lakeland. Unfortunately, the cleared areas now look not unlike those old photographs taken after battles in the first world war but, hopefully, time will heal the scars. On our way down a deer trotted across our path and a gaggle of geese swept north.

A HARRY GRIFFIN

Birthdays

Chris Evert-Lloyd, tennis player, 44; Jane Fonda, actress, 61; Bertrand Gachot, racing driver, 38; Albert Lee, rock guitarist, 55; Geoff Lewis, racehorse trainer, 63; Margaret McGowan, professor of French, University of Sussex, 67; Steve Perryman, footballer, 47; Anthony Powell, CR, novelist, 93; John Quayle, actor, 82; Sir John Quinlan, chairman Premier League Football, 69; Walter Spanghero, rugby player, 55; Greville Starkey, jockey, 55; Kiefer Sutherland, actor, 33; Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor, 54; Peter Thinswood, playwright, 82; Sir Cyril Townsend, former Conservative MP, 61; Bob Worcester, chairman, Mori, 65.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

THE PLAY that Ian McCaskill, weatherman turned panto rogue, saw at the Courtyard Theatre, West Yorkshire Playhouse (My cultural life, page 2, Friday Review, December 18), was not *The Cherry Orchard* but *The Seagull*. Mr McCaskill is appearing in *Puss in Boots* at the Theatre Royal, Windsor.

LOCKERBIE anniversary pages, Page 11, December 16, should have been King Edward VI, not St Edward VI.

THE AUTHOR of the entertainment, *Spread It Abroad* (1936) mentioned in the obituary for Clive Richardson, page 16, December 16, was Herbert Farjeon (not Farjeans).

THE FILM director mentioned in a column on page 11, G2, December 17, was Rainer

Werner Fasshinder (not Werner Rainer Fasshinder).

IT IS THE POLICY of the *Guardian* to correct errors as soon as possible. Please quote date and page. Readers may contact the Readers' Editor by telephoning 0171 239 9589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Letters to Readers' Editor: The Guardian, 119, Farringdon Road, London, EC1R 3SR. Fax: 0171 239 9897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

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FinanceGuardian

Delays in tackling 'dirty dozen' exposes failure to invest



Still waiting... passengers at Birmingham New Street, one of Railtrack's unsolved trouble-spots

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD LEA-HARR

Railtrack under fire

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

RAILTRACK'S failure to invest in the national network was exposed last night when the firm admitted that it will take another six years for it to complete work on its 'dirty dozen', the 12 worst bottlenecks on Britain's railway.

It revealed that it has currently produced detailed plans for only two of the bottlenecks — on which some of the work will not be finished until 2005. Plans for the remaining 10 are due to be announced next year.

The best-known trouble spot is the £2.2 billion upgrading of the west coast main line between London and Glasgow, on which work has already started, and on which new trains will be running by 2002.

The other projects include a £70 million improvement in and around Birmingham New Street station, on which work is expected to start over Christmas, and an upgrade of the busy line between Clapham Junction in south London and Gatwick airport.

The official jargon for these trouble spots is "network capacity constraints", or the "critical top 12". They are recognised as such because they are affecting current performance and constraining additional capacity.

The rail regulator has told Railtrack he wants to see a 7.5 per cent improvement in its performance by the end of 1999. He insists the company sets out detailed plans for achieving this when it issues its annual targets in March.

Railtrack said: "We have yet to receive reports from all our regions. Some of them are

being worked on, but we intend to remove these bottlenecks as quickly as possible."

The company seems likely to come under renewed pressure to finish the job speedily from the chairman of the Government's shadow strategic rail authority Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, who has made the chairman's appointment by the end of January. Since it was privatised almost three years ago, Railtrack has been continually criticised by the industry regulator for underinvesting in the network.

With the exception of the Birmingham New Street plan and the upgrading of the west coast main line, it was unable

to provide costings for the remaining 10 projects yesterday. Sir Robert Horton, Railtrack's chairman, says that by 2001 it will have spent £1 billion more on the railway than the rail watchdog expected. But he will have to face a tougher regulator.

The most recent regulator, John Swift, was sacked by Mr Prescott for being too soft on Railtrack. The Government is looking for a successor who can make the company more accountable to the taxpayer for its actions.

The acting regulator, Chris Bolt, has told Railtrack that its profits as a private monopoly are too high, and that he plans to set a 6 per cent cap on its returns. Railtrack will have to demonstrate that it is acting more urgently to get rid of the 12 bottlenecks or it could be fined for an investment famine.

The critical list

- 1 Weymouth Garden City to Wokingham — under review
- 2 Leeds station, considerable congestion — still under review
- 3 York to Manchester, bad delays — still under review
- 4 West London line, badly in need of extra capacity — still under review
- 5 Clapham Junction to Gatwick, "shear volume" of services causing serious problems — still under review
- 6 Severn to Oxford, congested suburban services — still under review
- 7 London Bridge to Charing Cross, Thameslink layouts — still under review
- 8 West coast main line, £2.2 billion upgrading, ready in 2002-2005
- 9 Birmingham, £70 million revamp over the next two years
- 10 Coventry to Wolverhampton, track widening — still under review
- 11 Crewe to Manchester airport, track widening, options being examined
- 12 Manchester Piccadilly — adjacent area to station needing improvement, options being examined

Halt is called to air wars

David Gow
Industrial Editor

SIR Richard Evans, British Aerospace chairman, and Jürgen Schrempp, ultimate head of DaimlerChrysler, have agreed a two-week "cooling-off period" in increasingly frantic talks to agree a merger between Europe's largest defence company and its German counterpart. It emerged last night.

The two chairmen have instructed their respective negotiators to go back to the drawing board in the new year. After a series of last-minute hitches, including a dispute over voting rights and, not least, the intervention of GEC as a would-be partner, German industry sources said.

These latest manoeuvres in the struggle to restructure Europe's aerospace and defence industry put enormous pressure on GEC to reveal its own strategy amid evidence that the company's board is planning a meeting with the government even today, to finalise its options.

GEC sources refused to comment on the timing of any board meeting but confirmed that a £23 billion mega-merger between their company and BAE, effectively leaving Dasa to one side, was an option. "We are on the verge of making a decision but whether it's before or after Christmas is up to other people," one said.

City analysts believe GEC is more likely to conclude an alliance with one of the big American defence firms — Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman or Raytheon — because teaming up with another defence electronics firm is said to be six times more valuable to shareholders than the "vertical" deal with BAE, which is primarily a platform builder. But the company has exerted more muscle on the European scene since Sir Roger Hurst took over as chairman on December 1.

These moves prompted Mr Schrempp last week to go over the heads of his chief negotiators, Manfred Blesch, Dasa chairman, and Eckhard Cordes, head of mergers and acquisitions and architect of this year's merger between Daimler and Chrysler, the US car firm. Any GEC involvement, via its Marconi defence electronics arm, would dilute Dasa's stake in the merged firm.

Economics Notebook

Competition paper learns from past



Pam Meadows

THE white paper Our Competitive Future is a surprisingly thoughtful and balanced document. Of course it contains some ideas that are so commonplace that most people would not even think of writing them down. But it does the common trap of regarding competitiveness as simply a matter of reducing unit labour costs (or getting the exchange rate down).

It does not treat the whole economy as though it were a single company — UK plc of the eighties, which in turn was reminiscent of Private Eye's Heathco of the seventies. Instead it looks at some of the features which are associated with successful companies and asks how the government can encourage or support them.

The Chancellor's pre-Budget statement last month concentrated on the issue of productivity. Productivity and the Chancellor's statement are only part of the context. The white paper recognises that international comparisons of productivity performance have their place, but ultimately what matters is that customers are willing to pay a price for goods and services which is acceptable to, and preferably profitable for, the supplier.

ern efficient hotels with ergonomic room and floor layouts. We have all experienced these hotels. They are very efficient. They all have the same television channels. They could be anywhere.

But the 50 per cent of British hotels that are in listed buildings offer a different experience. They appeal to people who are paying with their own money, who regard the experience as an integral part of the package (rather in the way that imagined sexiness is part of the BMW package). If the only choice was a modern concrete box the result would not be higher output per employee, it would be no output per employee because the customers would not be there. This illustrates the danger of drawing conclusions from statistics alone.

The white paper does not just propose simplistic solutions. It makes the case for a change of culture in business to encourage new ideas in products, services, processes and marketing. It rightly argues that these issues are as relevant in old-fashioned low and medium technology sectors such as construction and many services as they are in the most advanced sectors such as pharmaceuticals. Moreover, partnerships can help companies develop in these areas as well as competition. It recognises that in some businesses people and their talents are the only asset, yet conventional accounting treats them only as a cost, because they are not actually owned.

Some sections have the air of ritual about them. One argues the need to improve our education base in the sciences and engineering, without addressing the reason students are choosing the arts and the social sciences because they tend to lead to better paying jobs, often with higher social status.

THE White Paper puts forward the case for local industry clusters without any evidence that these do genuinely produce spin-off benefits. There is a down side to clustering as well: it generates the one-industry town, particularly vulnerable to long-term structural changes in the economy, as with textiles, steel and coal towns. There is a counter argument that diversity in a local economy spreads risk and may encourage the spread of innovative practices in a different way. The notion of benchmarking, after all, is based on the idea that businesses operating in diverse sectors can learn from each other. The logistics industry has developed on the back of the notion of just-in-time production methods by Japanese car companies. This is a good example of the kind of development which Our Competitive Future seeks to encourage.

Pam Meadows is Visiting Fellow at the National Institute of Economic and Social Research and Visiting Professor at the National Institute for Working Life, Stockholm.

Big business decides that charity begins at home

Hi-fi chain tops league table of givers, writes Julia Finch

A HI-FI store chain and the Betterware household goods firm are the UK's most generous companies, according to a study published today.

The hi-fi group, Richer Sounds, has handed over an average of 11.5 per cent of its profits to good causes over the past three years, while Betterware — whose name is still synonymous with the array of door-to-door brush salesmen it once employed — gave away nearly 10 per cent of its pre-tax profits.

In cash terms their gifts are not large. Richer Sounds has made average annual donations of £108,000 in the past three years, while Betterware has given an average of £125,000.

The biggest corporate givers are drawn from among the UK's most profitable and powerful companies.

The drugs group Glaxo Wellcome heads the list with average annual donations of nearly £3 million and a total of 20 companies support charities with donations of more than £1.5 million a year.

But, according to the Charities Aid Foundation, they are not the most generous, because most of the donations represent a tiny fraction of the relevant companies' profits.

Glaxo's huge handout, for instance, is only 0.33 per cent of its annual pre-tax profits.

Only one company — the drinks and entertainment group Seagram — qualifies as one of the biggest profit-makers and one of the most

generous companies. Its £4.74 million average annual handout to charitable causes is more than 7 per cent of pre-tax profits.

Last year charitable donations rose by nearly £14 million, with the top 500 donors raising a total of £195 million, according to the CAF.

The foundation is establishing a Generosity Index which will be published each Christmas, highlighting the most generous givers.

CAF's Generosity Index shows that the average donation as a percentage of pre-tax profits is only 0.22 per cent.

Richer Sounds, which was founded by 39-year-old

Julian Richer and is the retailer which sells the world record for sales per square foot, gives away an amount representing 52 times the average ratio.

Anthony Hunter, head of corporate services at the CAF, said: "The amount given to charity by businesses has never been measured in this way before. Now, using the CAF Generosity Index, businesses can evaluate their own charitable giving against that of other companies."

The CAF is a registered charity which tries to ensure that company donations are processed tax efficiently.

British companies now donate nearly £750,000 every working day to charity and the top 500 firms donate some £195 million a year to the good causes of their choice.

Sweet charity

Top 10 most generous companies (by % of pre-tax profits)	Average donation as % of pre-tax profits	Average donation (£m)
Richer Sounds	11.5%	£108,000
Betterware	9.7%	£125,000
Glaxo Wellcome	7.5%	£1,080,000
Seagram (Gai) Holdings	7.1%	£4,740,000
Cooper (Gai) Holdings	5.8%	£1,150,000
Marlowe Holdings	5.5%	£990,000
Body Shop International	2.5%	£250,000
Woolworths	2.4%	£240,000
Carlsberg	2.2%	£220,000
Mind Group	1.5%	£150,000
Top 10 corporate donors	Average donation as % of pre-tax profits	Average donation (£m)
Glaxo Wellcome	0.4%	£1,080,000
Marlboro	0.3%	£300,000
Seagram (Gai) Holdings	0.2%	£250,000
BP	0.2%	£200,000
Lloyds TSB	0.2%	£200,000
British Telecom	0.2%	£200,000
BT	0.2%	£200,000
British Airways	0.2%	£200,000
British Airways	0.2%	£200,000
British Airways	0.2%	£200,000

£3,000 windfall payment for NPI policyholders

Julia Finch

AUSTRALIAN insurance group AMP last night bought out NPI in a £2.7 billion takeover that should generate payments of an average £3,000 to most of the British mutual insurer's 630,000 policyholders.

The details of the acquisition were released to the Sydney stock exchange as the Australian market opened. The statement disclosed that all NPI policyholders will receive a minimum cash payout of £300 at a cost of £190 million. The 440,000 with-profit policyholders will get up-front around £900 each at an additional cost to AMP of £210 million. They can rely on average payments of more than £3,000 when an additional £1.4 billion is distributed to them over time.

The final value of the payouts will depend on the size of

individual policies and the length of time they have been in force. AMP is injecting £110 million into the NPI life fund and a further £800 million in capital support.

The stock exchange statement confirmed substantial losses among NPI's 2,000 British workers. A source close to the negotiations said: "Job shedding is implicit in any merger, but they will be kept to a minimum."

Alastair Lyons, NPI's chief executive, is expected to stay on after the AMP deal. NPI — which advertises on television using its trademark squirrel branding — put itself on the market two months ago after admitting it needed greater financial strength. The company was regarded as one of the weakest mutuals. The free asset ratio — the key measure of a life insurer's solvency — was a low 7.9 per cent last year, and this year's stockmarket

gyrations are understood to have weakened NPI further.

One insurance expert said at the weekend that if NPI had not found a partner quickly it would have been forced into a merger by the Treasury.

The top-line value of the AMP-NPI deal is substantially in excess of the value suggested when the British company was first put on the market. At that time it was thought NPI might fetch only £1.5 billion.

AMP, which tried to buy Scottish Amicable last year but lost out to the Prudential, has been keen to buy a life insurer strong in the independent financial services sector, which is growing rapidly.

It already owns Pearl Assurance, which sells direct to policyholders in their homes, fund manager Henderson and half of Richard Branson's Virgin Direct financial services operation.

MEPC boss leaves with £6m

Julia Finch

A FORMER executive at property group MEPC was paid £6 million in salary, bonus and compensation for losing his job, it emerged yesterday.

David Gruber, an American who ran the US portfolio of MEPC, received a £5.2 million commission from selling off the division and a further £773,000 compensation for subsequently losing his job.

At the same time, brewer Bass confirmed that its chairman and chief executive, Sir Ian Prosser, was paid a total of £1.6 million last year — up 97 per cent on the £826,000 he got a year earlier — as a new incentive plan began with a payout of more than £700,000.

Sir Ian, aged 55, received a basic salary of £300,000, a performance bonus of £298,000 and benefits worth £16,000, a total of £614,000. But a long-term incentive plan provided an extra payout of £717,000.

A spokesman for Bass said the new plan measured the firm's performance against rivals including Granada and Whitbread, and that the cash would be paid out at 50 per cent this year, 30 per cent next and the balance the year after.

But if Bass meets its targets Sir Ian will be in line for similar payout next year.

In addition to his pay bonanza Sir Ian has Bass shares worth more than £1 million and a range of potentially lucrative options.

At MEPC, Mr Gruber's pay-

off is likely to cause embarrassment for the firm and its chairman, Sir John Egan. It is understood that some shareholders are angry about the huge golden handshake and want to know how the figure 15 times more than the chief executive is paid was agreed. Mr Gruber sold the US business for £774 million.

MEPC, the UK's third-biggest property group, has had a difficult recent history. Dissatisfied investors once approached rivals to ask them to consider a bid, and chief executive James Tuckey only just kept his job after promising to retrench from abroad.

The firm revealed this month that pulling out of foreign operations would result in a £50 million loss.

US holds the key to Christmas

This week

Laurie Laird

THE key event of the Christmas week is the meeting of the US Federal Reserve Board's policy making committee. Observers believe the outcome on interest rates is too close to call, after November employment data out of the US indicated that the labour market remains tight.

But any move to lower rates may be seen as opening the door to similar moves in Europe. Closer to home, the Bank of England monetary policy committee will release the minutes of its December 9-10 meeting on Wednesday; the report could also provide a clue as to whether another rate cut is yet on the cards.

On the corporate side, just three companies report results this week. But there could be fireworks out of the Newcastle United shareholders' meeting today after majority shareholder Douglas Hall sold a portion of his stake in the club last week.

Inflation's death set for 2002

David Gow

INFLATION, the dragon that every Chancellor for the past 50 years has tried to slay, will be defunct within the next four years, a controversial economist predicts today.

Professor Doug McWilliams, chief executive of the Centre for Economic and Business Research, says the economy will contract from next year and the recession will destroy up to 800,000 more jobs while pushing down interest rates from 6.25 per cent to 3 per cent by 2000 and 2.4 per cent two years later.

The CEBR forecasts that as a result the underlying rate of inflation — the headline rate excluding mortgage interest — will drop from around 3 per cent now to 2.2 per cent next year, 1.9 per cent in 2000, 0.3 per cent in 2001 and minus 0.1 per cent in 2002. Britain's inflation rate will then be on a par with the present levels in much of continental Europe, where central bankers and economists point to a prolonged period of deflation.

TODAY'S Focus: Pearl Holdings.
TOMORROW: Focus: Keltay Industries.
WEDNESDAY: Focus: Stewarts & Wright.

The economics team adds up the pluses and minuses of a turbulent year – and considers what next year may bring

Recession time and the money is easy

Global view

Mark Atkinson

WHATEVER next? After more than a year of unprecedented turmoil in the global economy, characterised by see-sawing financial markets, the collapse of Russia and a deepening recession in Japan, only a fool would pretend to be able to predict with certainty what 1999 will bring. At the risk of sounding like John Mollison, it could go either way.

Either the steps already taken, principally by western central bankers, to foster growth will succeed in steering the ailing liner off the rocks of recession and we will escape with a short period of sub-trend growth. Or the look outs will prove to have spotted the danger too late and we will end up counting the casualties.

Fortunately, the immediate prospects do not look too one-sided. After teetering on the brink of collapse earlier in the year, cuts in interest rates in the US, Britain and the rest of Europe and a dramatic easing of both monetary and fiscal policy in Asia should ensure that the global economy continues to grow, albeit sluggishly.

In September, the International Monetary Fund's predicted that global growth will expand by 2.5 per cent in 1999 after 2 per cent this year. However, an interim forecast published later today is

expected to shade down those numbers slightly.

Such an outcome would not be a cause for celebration. In its annual report on the prospects for developing countries, published earlier this month, the World Bank said that global economic growth of 1.8 per cent in 1998 and 1.9 per cent in 1999 would still condemn more than a quarter of the population of the developing world to falling living standards.

But at least it would not be as bad as the Great Depression, when output in the present G7 countries – the US, Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Canada – fell by almost 30 per cent between 1929 and 1932.

The risks to such a relatively benign outcome are, however, legion.

First, there is a serious threat in the world of excess capacity, a glut of oil, other commodities and finished goods, as a result of the collapse of demand in East Asia and Japan leading to global deflation.

Prices are already falling in the East and are dangerously low in the West. Unless western monetary authorities continue to respond by cutting interest rates to stimulate demand, there is a real danger of a global slump.

Second, western stock markets, especially Wall Street, look uncomfortably over-valued. As the OECD think-tank pointed out last week, share prices are trading at a premium to normal yardsticks, and appear to be riding for a fall.

With the US savings rate

American consumers to retrench sharply will set into what is already expected to be moderate growth.

The European and US economies are the only shows in town at the moment and, if one of them falls by the wayside, its doubtful whether the remaining locomotive will have enough pulling power to keep the train moving.

Third, Japan remains caught in a liquidity trap, where interest rates can fall no lower to boost activity and successive fiscal packages are failing to compensate for the demand deficiency. Massive restructuring of the highly indebted financial and corporate sectors is needed, but considerably doubt remains about whether politicians are willing to grasp the nettle.

AS THE world's second-largest economy, Japan's recovery remains central to any hope of a meaningful global recovery.

Fourth, Europe's nascent upswing could be snuffed out by a surge in the value of the euro against the dollar and the yen. The European Central Bank will inherit a very low interest rate of 3 per cent, but it may need to be trimmed still further to keep growth going.

Fifth, Brazil remains a wild card. Congress has already balked at passing the legislation which would have seen feather-bedded civil servants' pensions taxed in order to reduce the country's bloated deficit.

Unless Brazil's fiscal auster-

ity plan succeeds in calming the markets, the risk of an uncontrolled devaluation remains huge.

Sixth, growth in China, until now a zone of stability in a sea of chaos, is decelerating quickly. In spite of attempts by regional authorities to massage the figures, the threat of a devaluation of the renminbi, which would trigger another round of competitive devaluations in Asia, has not disappeared.

Amid all these dangers in the global economy, the fate of the British economy over the next 12 months is far from clear. The Chancellor confidently predicts that Britain will emerge relatively unscathed, recording GDP growth of 1 to 1.5 per cent in 1999. Few outside the Treasury believe him. The latest average of independent forecasts is just 0.7 per cent.

A growing minority expects an ever worse performance. David Macchi at JP Morgan in the City is among those analysts predicting an outright recession, as was Christopher Dow, former economics director at the Bank of England.

In the book *Major Recession: Britain and the World 1920-45*, published this month, just after he died, Mr Dow said that a major recession has started, action is restricted to mitigating its extent and duration. He reckoned that Britain was in just such a situation.

The Bank's monetary policy committee, after being side-tracked earlier in the year by misleading average earnings figures, has responded to slowing eco-



nomic growth by cutting interest rates three times in the last three months, for which it has won plaudits in industry and the City. But the nominal cost of borrowing is still more than twice that in the putative euro-zone.

The Bank has probably acted too late to avoid a growth slipping into negative territory at some point over the next six to eight months, according to even the relatively optimistic analysts. But, with inflation so sub-

dued, there remains plenty of scope to minimise the damage by easing monetary policy much further. In a forecast published in October, Mr Dow said British interest rates could fall to as low as 2.5 per cent by late 1999.

With household and company balance sheets in such rude health, that probably won't be necessary. But a floor of 5 per cent does seem eminently reasonable. The sooner we get there the better.

Brown proves a covert radical

Government

Larry Elliott

NOBODY could accuse Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, of a lack of consistency. Throughout 1998 his public utterances – whether speech, lecture and press conference – have been graced with a familiar litany.

At the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund in early October, for example, the Chancellor made it abundantly clear where he was coming from: "It is in the pursuit of our long-term goals – high and stable levels of growth and employment – and the rejection of the short-termism and stop-go policies that have undermined the UK economy in the past that we have taken tough decisions."

Just in case anybody at home failed to understand the message, Mr Brown repeated the sentences, word for word, in a speech to the British Retail Consortium the following week. Other favourites have been "prudence", regarding public finances and "transparency and accountability", the chestnuts saved for his assessments of the global situation.

Meanwhile, the economy has been steadily slowing. In the final quarter of last year, it was growing at an annual rate of 1 per cent, but the pace of expansion dropped to 3.7 per cent in the first quarter of 1998, 3 per cent in the second and 2.3 per cent in the third quarter. Limited data for the

fourth quarter suggest the situation has markedly worsened, with manufacturers' orders dropping in response to weak consumer demand.

Six months ago, Mr Brown was the darling of Labour MPs when he announced that spending on health would rise by 4.7 per cent a year and on education by 5.1 per cent for the rest of this parliament. But the bouquets will be replaced with brickbats if the economy slides into recession over coming months.

Critics of the Chancellor – and there are plenty – think the state of the economy is due to his bone-headed orthodoxy. Mr Brown's own actions were critical – handing control of interest rates to the Bank of England, freezing public spending and convening in the over-valuation of sterling. Now, they say he is reaping a traditional British whirlwind, for all his talk of ridding the country of boom-bust.

There is something in this view. It is undoubtedly true that the conduct of macroeconomic policy during 1998 has helped create the conditions in which a sharp slowdown in activity was inevitable, and an outright recession a distinct possibility. Mr Brown may go down in history as the financial equivalent of Hardy's Mayor of Casterbridge, who makes an early error which comes back to haunt him.

That said, there have been many good things about the conduct of the economy in 1998. The Chancellor's rhetoric masking a range of radical and redistributive reforms. The idea that the overall strat-

egy is reactionary, a continuation of Thatcherism by other means, is lazy thinking.

The March Budget was a prime example of Labour's approach, which is to employ the language of extreme moderation but then slip through measures which are actually progressive. The City loved the Budget, after being most significant event of the year, which urged central banks to pursue growth strategies. As Mr Brown put it in Harvard last week: "In the international economy, the era of absence of government is over."

How can 1998 be summed up? Obviously, interest rates should have come down more quickly than they did, and if the economy goes into recession as a result Mr Brown will not escape his share of the blame.

His reluctance to even attempt to talk down the level of sterling seems bizarre, given what the Confederation of British Industry has been saying about exporters' prospects. But the macroeconomic outlook is not entirely poor, given that inflation is low and the public finances are much healthier than expected. Both monetary and fiscal policies will be eased next year.

More important for the long term, the unfolding crisis of the global economy over the past 18 months has legitimised the return of an interventionist approach to economic policy at the micro-economic domestic level and on the international stage.

Like the Government as a whole, the Chancellor is more radical than he looks.

International affairs. Again, the rhetoric was of the need for monetary and fiscal orthodoxy, while the reality was a British-American push to make the West realise the threat to the global economy was no longer inflation but deflation. In many ways the most significant event of the year was the City's decision to urge central banks to pursue growth strategies. As Mr Brown put it in Harvard last week: "In the international economy, the era of absence of government is over."

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Like the Government as a whole, the Chancellor is more radical than he looks.

Waking up weightless on Wall Street

Markets

Charlotte Denny

AS THE old saw goes, if you owe the bank a thousand dollars, you are in trouble. If you owe the bank a million dollars, your bank is in trouble. But if you owe the bank \$900 billion, then the whole financial world is in trouble – as the case of Long Term Capital Management proved this year.

Throughout the health of the tiger economies did not stop Wall Street and the Footsie rocketing away over the first six months of the year. Both had reached record highs by July despite dire warnings from analysts that shares were overvalued by any historical measure.

But the prospects for world growth were becoming darker by the month. Repeated attempts to kickstart Japan since the crash of 1997, in an attempt to shore up fragile confidence and stop a credit squeeze throttling the American economy, the Chairman of Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, announced a cut to borrowing rates to 5.25 per cent.

The Bank of England quickly followed the Fed at the beginning of a global round of rate reduction, which culminated in the euro-zone countries cutting their rates in early December.

By the end of the year, the promise of cheaper borrowing – a signal that policymakers were finally taking the

credit spreads around the world – into difficulties.

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By the end of the year, the promise of cheaper borrowing – a signal that policymakers were finally taking the

financial crisis seriously – had prompted recoveries on both sides of the Atlantic.

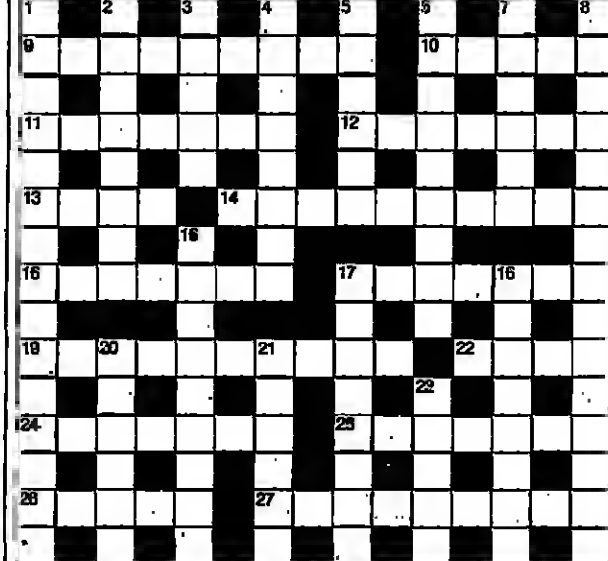
On Wall Street, the Dow Jones had bounced back above its mid-year high at the end of November, before sliding off slightly in December. The

Footsie was more muted, making up most of its losses.

As the markets close for Christmas, investors may be glad of a holiday. But come the New Year, it will be time again to see how long Wall Street defies gravity.

Guardian Crossword No 21,463

Set by Rufus



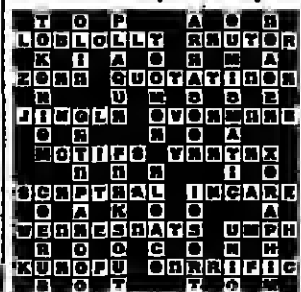
Across

- 9 Cradle song? Not really! (4,5)
- 10 Fruit crop (5)
- 11 Force one may make light of (7)
- 12 A game little insect? (7)
- 13 System for better transport (4)
- 14 Set right an inaccurate alignment (10)
- 16 Notice cut out and displayed (7)
- 17 Crack mountaineers will be familiar with it (7)
- 19 The first to be in action (2,3,5)
- 22 Short of ammunition (4)
- 24 The way horses walk (7)
- 25 About to be included in special offer on the house (3,4)
- 26 Key edit of Parliament, one raising awkward points (5)
- 27 Chaps entering into a welcome correspondence (9)

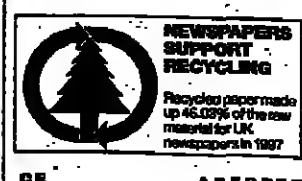
Down

- 1 Secret trial of service one pays for (7,8)
- 2 Casting is one of his jobs in the studio (8)
- 3 Black mark may be examined in the lab. (5)
- 4 Tees should be made with sand – agreed? (8)
- 5 Two bills I stuck on a tree (6)
- 6 A fount of small type (8)

WINNERS OF PRIZE PUZZLE 21,456
This week's winners of a Collins English Millennium Dictionary are Gillian Oakes of Cheshire, Ian Goldcott of Norwich, Anne Pascoe of London, SW19, Mel Pittchard of Stamford, Lincolnshire and David Walker of Cottingham, East Yorkshire.
Please allow 28 days for delivery.



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23 Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0801 234 222. Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Service supplied by RTE.



This year give something worthwhile at Christmas

The Guardian

This year the Guardian is inviting readers to spend a little extra at Christmas – and make a donation to The Guardian Christmas Appeal, the proceeds from which will be distributed among the selected charities and their work, please see the regular features running in the paper throughout December. You can give to any of the charities individually or make a general donation to the appeal, simply by calling the number below with a credit or debit card.

0990 199 515

WaterAid works to provide clean drinking water, sanitation and to promote public hygiene among the 1.4 billion people world wide who do not have clean drinking water.

Family Service Units offers counseling and support at grass-roots level to families in Britain's most deprived inner cities.

The Soil Association has been championing organic farming since 1945, and studying the impact of modern agriculture on animals, humans and the environment.

The Appeal is also supporting the five winning charities from the Guardian Jewwood Award, which rewards excellence in small charities from all over Britain: Deafblind UK, Habitat for Humanity (Belfast), Jessie's Fund, Free Form Arts Trust, Walsall Carers Centre.

Calls charged at national rates. Lines open until midnight on 31/12. Unfortunately we cannot accept Switch payments.

We're all unimportant now

Worm's eye

Dan Atkinson

ONE OF the great issues about which we are all expected to become terribly anxious is the so-called information gap between the rich and the poor.

The idea seems to be that wealthy people will enjoy the enormous advantages of clicking around for hours on end with their computers while people on council estates will be forced to do terribly boring things such as drinking, going to the races and making love.

There is no doubt that the gap is real one. But whether it has much to do with access to the Internet and that sort of thing is more doubtful. There is, for example, a chasm opening up between those who have

the private-line numbers of important people and can thus reach them by dialling once only, and the great masses who find themselves snared for 20 minutes at a time on a robot-operated switchboard that always seems to be inviting the caller to dial 1 "for further options".

Now that's a real information gap – as is the one opening up between those who are tip-toeing as demurely as possible towards the City on their financial markets and those who have simply swallowed the reassuring line that the events of 1998 – from Tokyo through Malaysia and Russia all the

way to Brazil – were merely an unfortunate kink in the asymptotic surge towards total competitiveness and Total Returns.

It is a long-established stock market rule that the last people to realise that it's time to sell are in the last wave of suckers who came in just before the top.

Take one look at the ever-expanding bubble in the City and Wall Street during the past 12 months – and then put your hand on your chest and insist that the current valuations are entirely in line with a US economy borrowed way beyond the hilt and a British economy tipping

into recession. Of course, it could all be different this time. But then it always is.

The trigger word for a stock market crash is "plateau". This is the reassuring handle that was applied 70 years ago to the last unsustainable inflation of asset values.

It sounds so comforting: a plateau is a big flat thing that you just cannot fall off. You sit on it, soak up the sunshine there and congratulate yourself on having held your nerve, on having refused to be panicked by troubles in far-off countries and on having generally been a bit of an Ivan Boesky.

There is nothing wrong, of course, with big flat surfaces at a very high altitude. Nothing wrong at all, that is, until you realise that you are three-quarters of the way over the edge. A very merry Christmas – and a very cautious new year.

People on council estates will be forced to do terribly boring things like drinking, going to the races and making love

Indicators

TODAY – UK: National accounts (Q3)
UK: Balance of payments (Q3)
TOMORROW – EMU: ECB meeting
UK: FOMC meeting (November)
IMF: World economic outlook
WEDNESDAY – UK: Trade in

goods (November)
UK: GDP (Q3 Final)
THURSDAY – UK: FOMC meeting
US: Jobless claims (week ending December 19)
FRIDAY – JP: Industrial production (November, prelim)
IMF: World economic outlook
SATURDAY – UK: Trade in

Tourist rates – bank sells

Australia	2.63	Germany	2.7053	Malaysia	6.36	Singapore	2.72
Austria	16.96	Greece	463.43	Malta	0.61	South Africa	9.84
Belgium	55.76	Hong Kong	12.67	Netherlands	3.036	Spain	229.96
Canada	2.52	India	71.19	New Zealand	3.18	Sweden	13.22
Cyprus	0.83	Ireland	1.003	Norway	2.85	Switzerland	2.28
Denmark	10.34	Israel	7.03	Portugal	275.88	Turkey	457.960
Finland	8.30	Italy	2.691	Saudi Arabia	6.20	USA	1.6988
France	6.04						

Supplied by National Bank of Scotland, London and Reuters

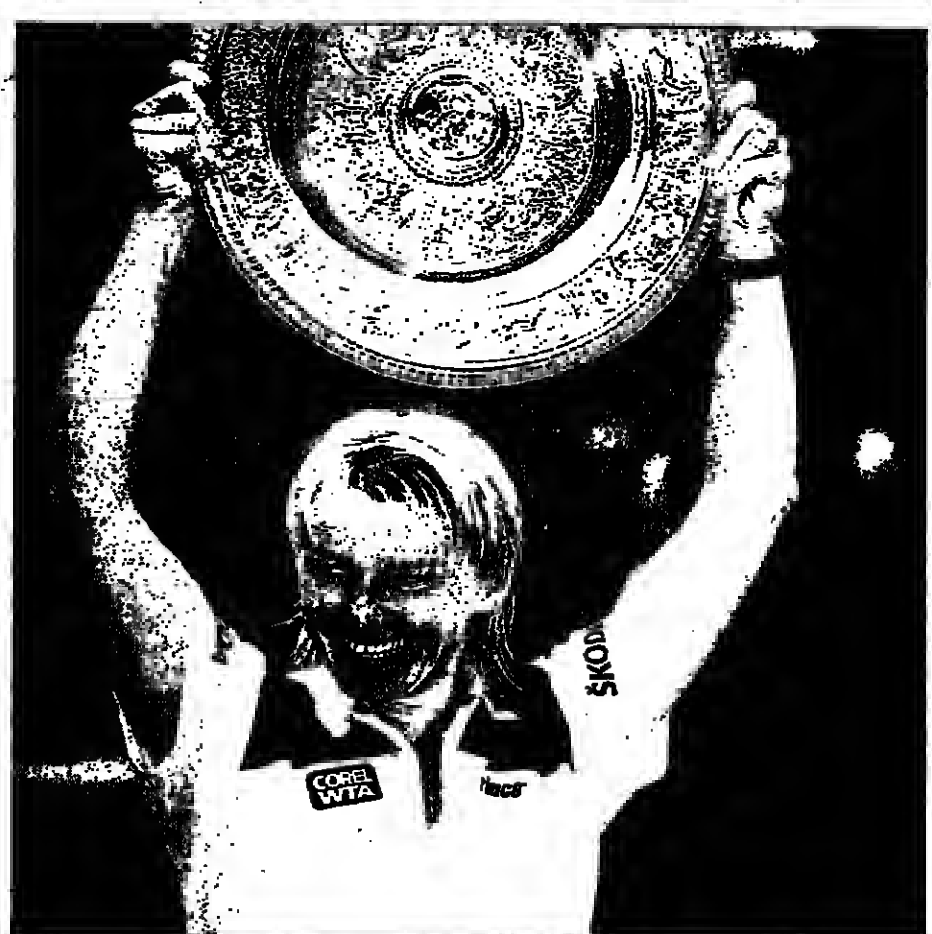
John's 100 1520



Jana Novotna is comforted by the Duchess of Kent after losing the 1993 Wimbledon final. PAUL HARRIS

What a difference five years can make. No one who watched the women's final in July will forget the day it came right for Jana Novotna at the third time of asking, just as the duchess said it would.

In the first of a seasonal series on the past year **Stephen Bierley** recalls Wimbledon



Summer dish of delight... Novotna raises the singles trophy at Wimbledon 98. MIKE HEWITT

Triumph at last for the choker turned joker

ONE of the most compelling images in tennis during the closing decade of this century was of Jana Novotna, the Czech, looking down in despair after losing the 1993 Wimbledon final to Steffi Graf. The image of a heartbroken loser, choking on her emotions, wept in the arms of the Duchess of Kent.

Four years later Novotna was on Wimbledon's Centre Court again, losing in three sets to the 16-year-old Swiss Martina Hingis. No tears this time, but playful resignation. Asking her disappointment if she snatched the silver water dish away from Hingis and made as if to run with it. Despite the fact that she

had been told by her royal comforter: "Don't worry. I am sure it will be third time lucky," it was generally felt that Novotna had visited her last duchess. The 1998 image of a heartbroken loser, choking on her emotions, wept in the arms of the Duchess of Kent.

There is no record of the crinkles (ie. any player over 20) gathering around a boiling cauldron and tossing in the odd fillet of meat or newt's eye, but by the time the final at Roland Garros was reached the teenies had fallen under the spell of what may be politely referred to as the more mature players.

Novotna fans may have also taken heart from Petr Korda's victory in the men's final at Melbourne. Another renowned under-achiever, the 30-year-old Czech defeated Chile's Marcelo Rios for his first Grand Slam title.

Novotna had noted the comments of the younger players on the Tour, recognised their innate confidence and determined to push herself to the limits in order to match their hunger for success. Three years ago, her

father's illness persuaded her that she was taking tennis too seriously. "I started to enjoy myself more. In the past people thought I was not a nice person because I didn't talk a lot. Lately the misconceptions have changed, which is incredibly important to me." And her father has

recovered. Novotna now admits to being totally unprofessional when she was in her late teens, and recognises the current dilemma facing Hingis. "She's not as devoted to her tennis as she used to be. She wants to do different things, which is fine, but she has to find the time to dedicate herself to tennis too."

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Cricket

Chanderpaul ton leads recovery

ONLY rain and bad light managed to contain Shivnarine Chanderpaul yesterday in Pietermaritzburg as the West Indies scored a superb unbeaten 132 in the second day of a four-day match against South Africa.

The weather closed in midway through the afternoon session with the West Indies, who had begun the day on 77 for three, on 266 for six in their first innings. Chanderpaul, 27 overnight, completed his century in 201 minutes off 164 balls with 15 fours and a six. When play was called off he had faced 212 deliveries and taken his tally to 1,000.

West Indies went in to lunch on a rocky 194 for five but then the 24-year-old Guyanese batsman and the reserve wicket-keeper Junior Murray put together the most significant stand of the day. They added 100 for the sixth wicket, riding their luck as Murray was dropped twice in making 45.

Earlier, Chanderpaul and Darren Ganga had taken their fourth-wicket stand begun on Saturday to 71 before Ganga, on 21, edged an away swinger from Lance Klusener to Sven Koenig at third slip.

Klusener - the pick of the bowlers with three for 47 - produced a similar delivery next ball to trap Floyd Reifer leg before. Murray survived the hat-trick ball but only just as it whistled past the outside edge of his bat.

Brad Hodge scored his second successive century to produce a similar delivery next ball to trap Floyd Reifer leg before. Murray survived the hat-trick ball but only just as it whistled past the outside edge of his bat.

The NSW innings included 116 on Saturday from Steve Waugh, playing his only Sheffield Shield match of the season because of international commitments. Victoria's leg spinner Shane Warne continued his comeback from shoulder surgery by bowling 26 overs. He failed to take a wicket but said: "This is the best I've bowled since I returned."

Warne and Waugh to air allegations. SHANE WARNE and Steve Waugh will testify via a live video link to a Pakistan inquiry into match-fixing. The Australian Cricket Board said on Saturday.

Zimbabwe in the clear despite fog

BAD WEATHER was the only winner in the weekend's two Test matches, but it brought with it celebration for Zimbabwe's touring team in Pakistan.

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Cardiff close ranks during lull for Storm

CARDIFF took full advantage of a weekend of inactivity for the leaders Manchester Storm as their 5-2 home win over the Avon Scorchers kept the gap at the top to only three points.

India end long wait

INDIA, so long without a title, have won the Asian Games men's event for the first time in 32 years. They defeated South Korea 4-2 on penalties after the scores were level at 1-1 following extra-time in the final at Bangkok on Saturday.

Leopards finally spot on

Recently the Eagles had twice defeated the Leopards and a third loss looked a distinct possibility when they trailed 40-22. Chris Fie began and ended the first half with three-pointers for the Eagles who hit nine in all from long range before the interval but, significantly, only two afterwards.

Radcliffe stuck in the mud

PAULA RADCLIFFE's reputation was brought crashing to earth in Brussels yesterday in her first race since being crowned the European cross-country champion.

Williams keeps up century touch to peg back McManus

MARK WILLIAMS, the 23-year-old Welsh left-hander who defends his Benson & Hedges Masters title in February, was strongly placed to land his fourth world-ranked event when he beat Alan McManus 6-2 in their best-of-17 frames final of the Irish Open in Dublin.

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Rugby Union

Premiership: Bath 11 Saracens 19

Robinson haunted by the ghosts of Bath's past

Ian Malin discovers a tradition that has lost its meaning as winter begins to bite

SARACENS' Merry Christmas Every body over the Tannoy was drowned out by even more disturbing sounds at the end of Bath's fifth successive defeat. Boos greeted Bath's players seeking the sanctuary of the dressing-room as Saracens waved to the Fozzies huddled in the opposite corner of The Rec.

The delights of Bordeaux last January must have seemed as distant as a tropical beach. From strutting cup-winning European roosters to oven-ready turkeys in less than 12 months.

Bath have never lost five league games in a row before and Andy Robinson, their coach, knows that in the harsher world of professional rugby, the finger pointing his way is not becoming a Lottery winner.

Yes, people have told me I should resign. They have told me to my face. And the only answer I can give them is through the quality of our

performance on the pitch. But I'm not going to give this up. There is plenty to play for.

"On October 28 we were on top of the table and people were saying that this was the old Bath. But it is not. It is the new Bath, a team we are trying to develop. I'm part of that old Bath. It was great and a lot of the old values are still here."

"We dominated in the old amateur days. But it was before there was a domestic market in international players. Now Saracens turn up with players like Ponnau, Ponnau, Coker and Wallace. Our history was not about style. It was about winning. But doing that is a lot harder in professional rugby."

Robinson's opposite number Mark Evans agreed. "Bath used to have an aura, but it no longer exists, and I wonder if it will ever exist again in English rugby. Liverpool had a similar aura in soccer. For years we came here and got nothing. It was a

great English tradition but not now."

Saracens have beaten Bath four times in succession. And more worryingly for Bath, they did so on Saturday without playing particularly well. The Saracens defence was outstanding, as had Northampton's when they won here a week earlier. But in an undistinguished match there were only brief passages of an uplifting play.

One conjured up Saracens' try midway through the first half. The visitors strung together around 50 passes with the excellent Brendon Daniel making a vital break. From the ensuing scrum, Kyran Bracken darted through a huge gap and found Steve Ravenscroft on his shoulder to score.

There were brief flourishes from Bath, and one ended with an interception try from the promising Iain Balshaw, but Gavin Johnson's four successive kicks at goal ways put Saracens out of range. In truth, Bath never really looked likely to win although they may have had a case for a penalty try just before the break when Daniel appeared to tackle Adebayo without the ball.

Despite these teams having, in Dan Lyle and the Man of the Match Tony Diprose, No. 8 who handle like slip ciders, neither side was able to build up an attacking momentum.

And Bath's problems mount. They lost their scrum-half and captain Andy Nicol as early as the eighth minute and he was replaced by the less effective Steve Hogg. Nicol has damaged knee ligaments and so looks unlikely to play again this season.

Another half-back, Jon Preston, has a ruptured Achilles tendon after only one league appearance, and Phil de Glanville's shoulder operation will put him out of action for club and country until after the start of the Five Nations.

As Robinson says: "There is no hiding place. That's the heart of the problem. But it is deeply ironic that he is just the sort of player Bath need in what is turning into a winter of discontent at The Rec."

SCORES: Bath 11 Saracens 19. Bath: 1. Ponnau, 2. Ponnau, 3. Ponnau, 4. Ponnau, 5. Ponnau, 6. Ponnau, 7. Ponnau, 8. Ponnau, 9. Ponnau, 10. Ponnau, 11. Ponnau, 12. Ponnau, 13. Ponnau, 14. Ponnau, 15. Ponnau, 16. Ponnau, 17. Ponnau, 18. Ponnau, 19. Ponnau, 20. Ponnau, 21. Ponnau, 22. Ponnau, 23. Ponnau, 24. Ponnau, 25. Ponnau, 26. Ponnau, 27. Ponnau, 28. Ponnau, 29. Ponnau, 30. Ponnau, 31. Ponnau, 32. Ponnau, 33. Ponnau, 34. Ponnau, 35. Ponnau, 36. Ponnau, 37. Ponnau, 38. Ponnau, 39. Ponnau, 40. Ponnau, 41. Ponnau, 42. Ponnau, 43. Ponnau, 44. Ponnau, 45. Ponnau, 46. Ponnau, 47. Ponnau, 48. Ponnau, 49. Ponnau, 50. Ponnau, 51. Ponnau, 52. Ponnau, 53. Ponnau, 54. Ponnau, 55. Ponnau, 56. Ponnau, 57. Ponnau, 58. Ponnau, 59. Ponnau, 60. Ponnau, 61. Ponnau, 62. Ponnau, 63. Ponnau, 64. Ponnau, 65. Ponnau, 66. Ponnau, 67. Ponnau, 68. Ponnau, 69. Ponnau, 70. Ponnau, 71. Ponnau, 72. Ponnau, 73. Ponnau, 74. Ponnau, 75. Ponnau, 76. Ponnau, 77. Ponnau, 78. Ponnau, 79. Ponnau, 80. Ponnau, 81. 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Football

Premiership: Chelsea 2 Tottenham Hotspur 0

Age does not weary Vialli as Blues go top

David Lacey

THE last player-manager to win a championship at Chelsea was Kenny Dalglish, who scored the goal which in 1986 secured the first half of Liverpool's Double.

On Saturday Gianluca Vialli, who would be the first of the breed to win the title for Chelsea, was asked how it felt to be top and replied that it was better than being bottom.

Not only does Vialli share Dalglish's penchant for lightning repartee he exudes more charm than the great communicator and speaks more intelligible English. But whether Chelsea become champions for only the second time will depend to some extent on how active a role on the field Vialli intends taking in the latter half of the season.

"I'm getting too old for this," he remarked after recalling himself to the attack for the 2-0 victory over Tottenham at Stamford Bridge on Saturday which took Chelsea to the top of the table for the first time since Armistice Day in 1989, when the First Division was still three years away from becoming the Premier League. Yet at 34 Vialli is a year younger than Dalglish.

First Division
Nov 11, 1989

Club	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chelsea	13	7	4	2	20	10	28
Arsenal	13	7	3	3	22	15	24
Liverpool	12	5	3	4	16	14	18
Nottingham Forest	13	5	5	3	21	16	21
Blackburn Rovers	13	6	3	4	19	14	21
Sheff Wed	13	5	5	3	19	14	21
Sheff Utd	13	5	5	3	19	14	21
Derby County	13	5	5	3	19	14	21
Coventry City	13	5	5	3	19	14	21
Southampton	13	5	5	3	19	14	21
Tottenham	13	5	5	3	19	14	21
Leeds	13	5	5	3	19	14	21
Manchester Utd	13	5	5	3	19	14	21
Manchester City	13	5	5	3	19	14	21
Charlton	13	5	5	3	19	14	21
Sheff Wed	13	5	5	3	19	14	21

lish was when he led Liverpool to the title on the same ground.

Age is clearly not going to be a problem for the Italian but on Saturday's evidence he needs regular matches if he is to lead by example as the championship approaches its climax. It was only Vialli's third Premiership appearance of the season (although he has played in five Cup Winners' and Worthington Cup games) and at times it showed.

Some of the touches were masterful, most noticeably when Vialli came deep to win possession and instigate movements with quick, accurate passes to the wings. But when extra pace was needed to shake off defenders or stay inside he looked sluggish, hence the murmurs of disapproval from Chelsea supporters when Gianfranco Zola, rather than Vialli, was ordered to make way for Tore Andre Flo 20 minutes from the end.

In fact the change was borne out by events, since Vialli set up Gustavo Poyet for the first of Chelsea's two late goals while Flo headed in the second, but as the season progresses the player-manager will surely find it more difficult to pick himself on an occasional basis. Dalglish, incidentally, appeared in nine of Liverpool's last 11 games in 1986.

Clearly the loss of the injured Pierluigi Casiraghi has persuaded Vialli that he needs to make a bigger contribution on the playing side than was his intention at the start of the season. So long as Flo remains content with walk-on parts all well and good, but apart from injuries there ought not to be many reasons why Zola, given his experience, fails to stay on for 90 minutes.

Vialli quoted an exhausting match at Old Trafford three nights earlier as the reason for Zola's premature departure on Saturday.

But up to that point the ur-chin's touches had been the saving grace of another of those scruffy London scuffles in which space is at a premium and the ball suffers from claustrophobia. His skills were like finding gold coins in a ploughed field, although Poyet's cool creative



Flying high... the Chelsea player-manager takes a tumble under pressure from Tottenham's Steve Carr as his team gets the better of a scrappy derby

PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS

influence again caught the eye.

For the time being the rustic approach suits Tottenham and under George Graham they are still enjoying the novelty of hard work. Until Chelsea's superior passing began to assert itself towards half-time Spurs' willingness to challenge for everything and track down opponents in possession promised them the point which was always going to be their most realistic aim.

When Vialli, sent clear and onside by Zola in the 58th minute, waited a rare chance over the crossbar the plot appeared to be working in Tottenham's favour. But within three minutes they had been reduced to 10 players by the dismissal of Chris Armstrong, and thereafter the whole picture changed.

Graham does not have much luck with Graham Poll, the referee who a year earlier had sent off two of his Leeds

team at Chelsea. By Poll's own strict standards he showed unaccustomed leniency towards some of Saturday's confrontations, but Armstrong should still have known better than to clip the heels of Albert Ferrer having previously been cautioned for kicking the ball away at a free-kick.

The Spurs manager could hardly complain about the sending-off since only a week earlier the dismissal of Man-

chester United's Gary Neville for two bookable offences had helped his team come from 2-0 down to force a draw at White Hart Lane. So Graham contented himself with the rider that "what we don't need is opposing players running 25 yards to remonstrate with the referee when he's already made up his mind".

Presumably Graham was referring to Frank Leboeuf, who led the Chelsea delegation. It's funny but George

bears a remarkable resemblance to the former manager of another north London club whose players wore red and from time to time would pursue referees with the single-minded determination of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

While Graham's earlier observation about the difficulty of scoring against 10 men still held good, Chelsea's passing game will always be hard to withstand once a side is a

player short. Poyet's goal, a gentle ricochet off a post, punished Spurs for allowing Celestine Babayaro's centre to reach Vialli and Flo's header rewarded Dan Petrescu's determination in keeping the ball in play before centering.

Chelsea have now won or saved at least six league matches with goals scored in the last 10 minutes. A similarly strong finish to the season and the title may yet be theirs.

Nottingham Forest 2 Blackburn Rovers 2

Blake bags brace as he tries to avoid hat-trick

Adam Sills

WHEN it comes to relegation matters, Nathan Blake and Dave Bassett go back a long way. The two experienced the drop when Blake's Bassett-managed Sheffield United side fell out of the Premiership in 1994.

The Blackburn striker's brace on Saturday did his old friend no favours as Rovers dumped Forest on the bottom of the Premiership for the first time this season. Bassett will need all his know-how to resolve his latest crisis.

"Not a lot of people come back from that experience," Blake said about that first taste of relegation. The Welsh international did, though, with Bolton, only to suffer the bitter pain of the drop once again on the final day of last season. Rovers paid £4 million for him in October and Blake does not want to complete an unsavoury hat-trick. "I haven't had any thoughts about relegation this season," he said, having secured a

point for Rovers which still leaves them languishing in the bottom three. "We can get out of this. We are just thinking about picking up as many points as possible."

Saturday's reward was fully deserved for the endeavour Blackburn showed in clawing back a 2-0 deficit. The manager Brian Kidd did a three-game unbeaten run under his belt and the only way for Rovers to survive was to win.

Kidd resembled a jack-in-the-box with his leaps from the bench to feverish gesture and below orders from the touchline. The other Jack, the owner and benefactor Jack Walker, will happily reward his manager's enthusiasm with an open chequebook.

Rovers have been linked with the Coventry defender Gary Breen and Leicester's midfielder Neil Lennon. If Ashley Ward arrives from Barnsley the cut-price departure of Kevin Davies could follow, though Kidd knows he will not be forced to sell and has access to Walker's crisp wallet when he wants them. "If players are available

that can strengthen the squad and give us an extra option, I am sure Mr Walker will listen sympathetically to me," Kidd said after seeing Keith Gillespie and Brian McClair make their respective debuts on pitch and bench.

Gillespie's introduction was overshadowed by the referee Stephen Lodge who did his best to upset the game and the Rovers bench with a ka-boom approach to whistle-blowing. His generous view of a challenge by Jesper Mattsson on Blake which should have seen the Swede uprooted from the pitch, came soon after Dougie Freedman had doubled Forest's first-half advantage.

He added a tap-in to Steve Chettle's hotly disputed penalty and should have made it 3-0 immediately after the interval when he shot wide with only John Flann in the Blackburn goal to beat. Blake took advantage and his double left Forest without a win in 15 league games since August and left Bassett with that sinking feeling once again.

West Ham United 2 Everton 1

West Ham refuse to offer any gifts

Russell Thomas

RIO FERDINAND will not be an expensive Christmas present to Liverpool, Manchester United or any other rich club. But next year who knows, even if it is an equal certainty West Ham's prodigious defender will not be leaving in any bargain-basement sales.

If Harry Redknapp had his way, Ferdinand would never leave Upton Park. But Redknapp, like so many other managers in these financially driven days, does not always

have his way. So the manager can do little but the next best thing: talk up the price even without mentioning any figures.

Redknapp conceded after his slightly fortunate win over Everton that his central defender's departure was almost inevitable. His salary to the 20-year-old player which preceded this admission was unquestionably sincere. And, if interpreted as a sales pitch, it was mightily impressive.

Asked whether a club like West Ham can keep hold of such talent, Redknapp answered: "Nowadays, it is not realistic to think so. It's

very difficult. All we can do at West Ham is to show him that we are ambitious as well."

In that case, Redknapp will have readily noted Ferdinand's comment early in the day that the club "is on the verge of big things". The highest thing that Ferdinand can probably enjoy this season is an FA Cup winners' medal and a place in a revamped UEFA Cup next year. That would provide a European stage for what Redknapp, in short, calls "a frightening talent".

West Ham are again hubbubbing nicely, but Redknapp believes it will be difficult to

break into England's strongest four.

Everton's manager Walter Smith strayed on the generous side, having "no excuses about the result even if we had a few players missing". In addition to injuries and suspensions, the departure of Ibrahim Bakayoko and, until the last 16 minutes, John Collins. The freak of Marc Koller's misfit cross and a fortuitous, if brave, bouncing header by Trevor Sinclair prevented Everton continuing their mini-revival.

In a game that raised further questions about the efficiency of Premiership defences, even

Ferdinand's extensive attributes could not prevent a deserved goal for Danny Cadamarteri and equally the towering Marco Materazzi, almost contemptuous in his control of John Hartson and Ian Wright, could not plug every gap in Everton's defence. Ian Kilbridge, a Cape Town investment banker, and his English-based father Bill could be planning to bid for Peter Johnson's controlling stake in Everton, the Sunday Independent of Johannesburg reported. "We have been involved with Everton for a long time as a family," Kilbridge said.

Coventry City 1 Derby County 1

Smith's subs bear fruit

Peter White

JIM SMITH is affectionately known as the Bald Eagle, but what he may lack in hair on his head, he more than makes up for with his wealth of knowledge inside it.

Perhaps Smith, the Derby manager, could be forgiven if one day he opts to conduct matters wearing a wig and gown, for when he is in a spot of bother he invariably turns to the bench for a positive verdict.

The substitutes' bench again proved his salvation at Highfield Road, when two half-time changes played a significant part in Derby clawing their way back to earn a draw.

of Noel Whelan's close-range strike. After the game, Smith left his young assistant Steve McLaren to explain the transformation in Derby's fortunes after they had been outplayed for most of the opening period.

McLaren said: "There is no substitute for the experience Jim has picked up over the years. I am 37, and still learning. I do not believe I could yet go into a club as manager as do the things he does, like make astute changes while a game is in progress."

Smith's half-time changes — Carsley for Dean Sturridge and Steve Elliott for Kevin Harper — might have been in vain if Coventry had converted their overall superiority into more goal-scoring opportunities. But the home side were not helped by a string of inconsistencies by the Sheffield

referee Uriah Rennie.

Three penalty appeals which on another day might have been upheld were all firmly rejected by Rennie, who also annoyed both teams with his erratic interpretation of yellow-card offences.

Strachan and his troops had every right to feel aggrieved shortly after Carsley's equaliser when the Derby defender Elliott's penalty-area challenge on Darren Huckerby should have sent the striker sprawling. Credit to Huckerby who some how managed to keep his feet.

Rennie appeared in the act of pointing to the penalty spot, but having seen the players' recovery, he changed his mind and allowed play to continue. Huckerby indeed paid the penalty for his honesty, and with that went the chance of Coventry securing a much-needed victory.

Southampton 3 Wimbledon 1

Unkind cut poops Le Tissier party

Pat Symes

MATTHEW Le Tissier inspired Southampton's climb off the foot of the Premiership, but his relief was short-lived after he was hit with a glass in a nightclub on Saturday night.

The 30-year-old was left with a head wound after trouble flared in Chicago Rock in Southampton where Le Tissier was celebrating the 3-1 victory over Wimbledon.

Le Tissier, the joint owner of the Celebration Plaza nightclub, has made a complaint to police. Earlier in the day Southampton had been fighting for their lives. Joe Kinnear had warned his Wimbledon players that the Saints would be more dangerous than Liverpool last Sunday, but his words were lost in a performance of uncharacteristic lethargy.

Kinnear was at a loss to explain why his players had failed to counter Southampton's direct attacking approach which would have done credit to the Dons' philosophy of old as they claimed

only their third win of the season.

Southampton's first goal was straight out of the Wimbledon manual: a long kick by the goalkeeper, flicked on by a giant forward, James Beattie, who was finished at pace by Egil Olsenstad.

The Southampton manager Dave Jones said: "We outdid Wimbledon in the Wimbledon way. In our position it doesn't matter how we get the goals." Southampton's three took their total for the season to a paltry 15 in 18 matches but if Neil Sullivan was Wimbledon's man of the match for a succession of excellent saves, Southampton also hit the woodwork three times — Beattie's old-style aggression was a key factor in the win.

Eyebrows were raised when Jones paid Blackburn £1 million for the striker as a by-product of the Kevin Davies transfer. It was easy on Saturday to see the attraction.

Beattie is only 20 and has scored one goal in his short career but he may yet provide an answer to the shortage which is threatening to end Southampton's 20-year tenure in the top flight. Jones said he had looked at 15 strikers beneath and beyond the Premiership without finding a credible or affordable answer. Olsenstad and the Moroccan midfielder Hassan Elachoul scored Southampton's other goals and Marcus Gayle's late goal for Wimbledon was very much a consolation effort.



Aerial power... Carlton Palmer outjumps Neal Ardley of Wimbledon during Southampton's important win

Platt shows his drawing power against Milan

DAVID PLATT had Ariel Ortega to thank as his career in charge of Sampdoria started with a 2-2 draw against Milan in Italy's Serie A, where Platt spent four seasons as a player.

The Argentinian struck a late free-kick to equalise Oliver Bierhoff's 80th-minute header which had threatened to spoil Platt's return to the Stadio Luigi Ferraris.

Platt was given a rousing reception by the home fans but was forced to watch from the stand and keep in radio contact with his No. 2 Giorgio Veneri as he is still awaiting a full Italian coaching licence. He saw his team fall a goal behind when Leonardo scored after a mix-up in the Sampdoria defence. Francesco Palmieri levelled the score after 53 minutes.

"We had prepared this match so well that there was little to say about it," Veneri said. "I only spoke to Platt twice."

Milan's Zvonimir Boban was sent off in the final minutes of the game. Fiorentina, for whom Gabriel Batistuta scored yet again, failed to exploit Milan's slip-up as Japan's Hidetoshi Nakata converted a penalty five minutes into injury-time to help Perugia hold the league leaders to a 2-2 draw.

Filippo Inzaghi scored a hat-trick as Juventus beat Salernitana 3-0, their first league win this month.

John G. 1998

010

Clagger

A sideways glance at soccer



The On The Christmas Card List

They've had run-ins galore this season

Black it don't fit
 (1) **Black it don't fit**
 (2) **Black it don't fit**
 (3) **Black it don't fit**
 (4) **Black it don't fit**
 (5) **Black it don't fit**
 (6) **Black it don't fit**
 (7) **Black it don't fit**
 (8) **Black it don't fit**
 (9) **Black it don't fit**
 (10) **Black it don't fit**

A life in pictures



Play Man management... carry as you like

Ask the experts

Has any club been top of a division at Christmas and still been relegated?

State of the nation
 Nigeria
 Population 120 million

A-Z of British football

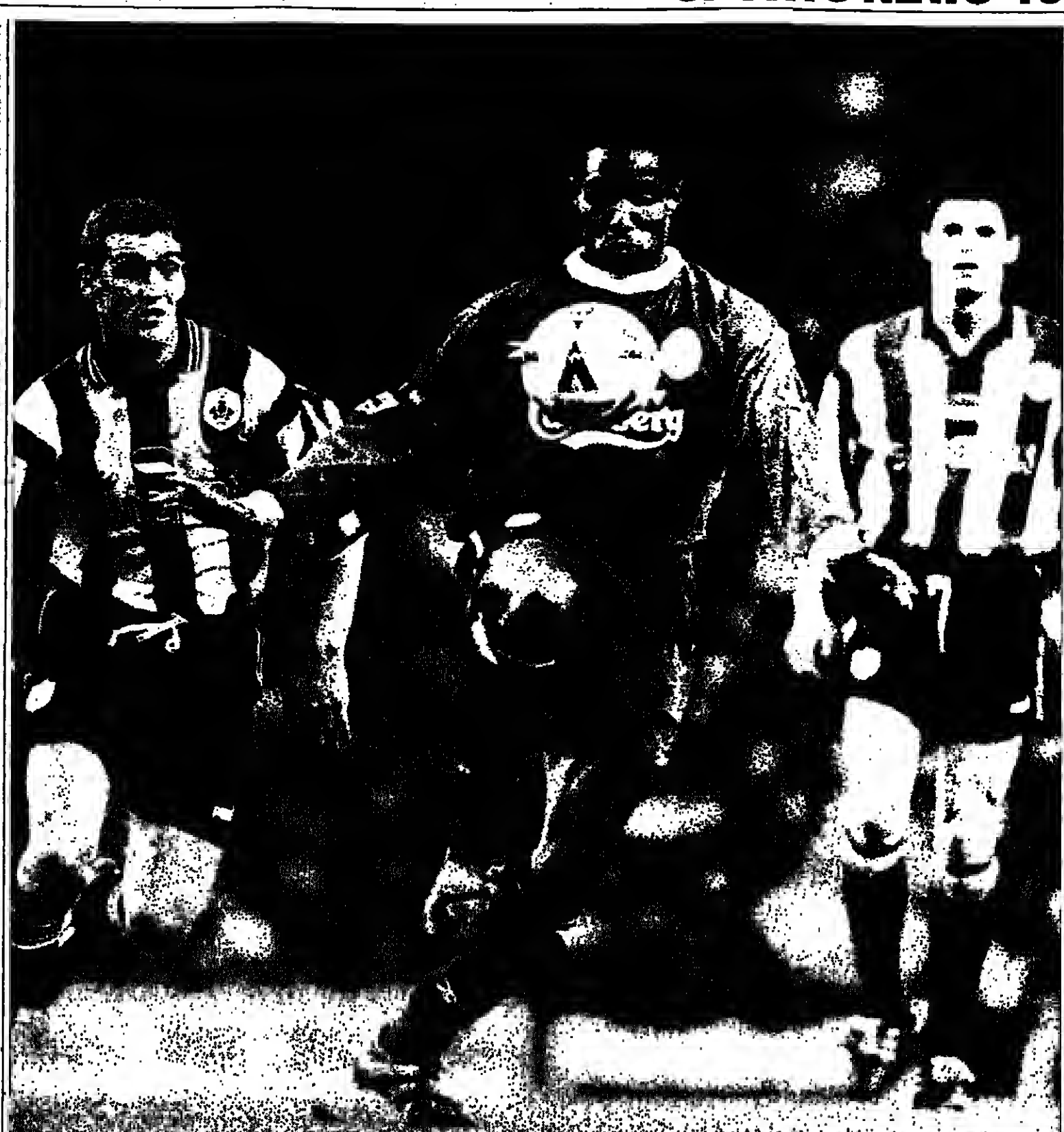
S is for Southampton, a club that has been relegated twice in the last 10 years.

Cup of winners



A straightforward question for the penultimate week of our Cup Winners' Cup competition. What do Manchester United have to do with the above photo? Post, fax or e-mail your answer to the address below to win your chance of being in the new list of the Football Book Club (0771-2001) 1998 for a challenge. Please include a phone number. Last week's answer, Eliaha's Paspas and Armita Torgov of (Boris) Armita, winner Jonathan Foster of Harrow, Middlesex.

Clagger welcomes contributions. Write to the Guardian, 110 Farringdon Road, London EC1A 3BB. You can e-mail us at clagger@guardian.co.uk or fax us on 01773-73 4407.



Controlling force... Liverpool's captain Paul Ince juggles the ball while Wednesday's Andy Booth gives chase

Premiership: Liverpool 2 Sheffield Wednesday 0

Liverpool labour the point despite best efforts of Berger and Owen

Ian Ross sees Houllier's less-than-perfect team emerge from their worst patch of form in 40 years with a home victory

WHEN a team are one defeat away from alienating their most blithely loyalists all they can ask for is a level playing field, a fair wind and, most crucially, an accommodating opponent.

While it would be stretching a point to suggest that Sheffield Wednesday had begun to unfurl the white flag before their arrival at Anfield, only fleetingly did they toy with the idea of deepening Liverpool's mid-season crisis. It was an opportunity calculatedly missed.

With their hosts marooned in their worst patch of form for more than four decades the assumption was that Wednesday would give it a real go at the very least, if only because the events of the last few months have conspired to prove that Liverpool are vulnerable when standing toe-to-toe with players of enthusiasm.

Sadly, too much was expected of the South Yorkshire club for it was only after they had shipped the two goals which always seemed likely to decide the outcome that they shaped as if to confirm their own emergence from the Premiership's trauma ward.

"They got their goals at a point when I thought we had weathered the storm," said Wednesday's manager Danny Wilson. "We really needed to score a goal during the period when we had most of the possession, but it just wouldn't come."

Actually it would not have come had the game been extended until Boxing Day despite the tireless running and sublime touches of Benito Carbone, Wednesday's attempts to rip a hole in Liverpool's tissue-paper defence fell only fractionally short of being embarrassing.

"I am particularly happy with the second half because we managed to keep a clean sheet and that doesn't happen very often these days," said Liverpool's manager Gerard Houllier with the look of a man who had just taken the first faltering step on a journey that threatens to be an extremely long one.

The accusation that Houllier's players neither care nor try is palpably false for their work-rate was again beyond reproach. But this Liverpool team are ordinary, decidedly so, and it will take a combination of firm leadership and huge bundles of cash if the slackers and mercenaries are to be flushed out and replaced not simply by better players, but by better players who can boast much more laudable ideals.

"We are not perfect," we know that," said Houllier. Houllier's main problem is the transparently imperfect form of Robbie Fowler whose recovery from a career-threatening knee injury has now slowed to a crawl.

The only way to restore the young England forward to full match fitness is to play him, of course, but he is so lacking in every department right now that it really is proving to be a painful exercise.

Match stats

	Liv	Wed
Possession	53%	47%
Attempts on target	7	0
Attempts off target	12	5
Corners	4	2
Fouls	10	10
Offsides	1	6
Bookings	2	1

The solution to the problem is likely to come in the form of the aforementioned firm leadership for as Fowler should display McManamanesque reluctance to accept the offer of a new contract, Houllier will probably seek to sell him before the season is over.

While he never looked like scoring Fowler did actually have a foot in both of Liverpool's goals, steering into the path of Patrick Berger after 19 minutes and then beginning the move which ended with Michael Owen's close-range drive 15 minutes later.

It was not until after the interval that Liverpool came to appreciate that the game was still theirs to throw away.

By way of laborious mid-field movement and a series of reckless clearances they applied themselves diligently to the task of dismantling what it was they had built in the first half.

True to form they tried to toss it all away, but this time it was beyond them.

Wiseman on way out, claims Kelly

GRAHAM KELLY believes Keith Wiseman's days as the Football Association chairman are numbered.

Kelly resigned as the FA's chief executive last week after the executive committee criticised the pair's decision to grant the FA of Wales £2.2 million in return for their support in Wiseman's attempt to become Britain's FIFA vice-president.

Wiseman refused to go, even though the executive committee passed a unanimous vote of no confidence in him because of the cash-for-votes affair. Wiseman claims it is up to the full FA council to decide his fate when it meets on January 4.

Kelly does not think Wiseman will survive, even though he is adamant they were both acting in the best interests of the FA and the campaign to stage the 2006 World Cup.

"His prospects are being painted fairly bleakly, but then they would be because the climate at the moment is, let's move on quickly and put all this unpleasantness behind us," Kelly told BBC Radio 5 Live yesterday. "If the council takes that line and back the executive committee, then Keith has very little chance of staying on as chairman."

Kelly was also adamant that the grant did not constitute a bribe. "A bribe to me is somebody slipping something into somebody's back pocket and then they go away and stash it in the Bahamas," he said.

Wiseman echoed that view, saying: "I don't see it as remotely being a bribe — a bribe to me is where a payment is made for personal gain, not where it funds boys at school playing football."

He claimed leading figures in the game had wanted Kelly out. "Several people had been after Graham for some time. I'm not going to name names but various individuals... wanted someone in place prepared to act as they wanted."

As for himself, Wiseman insists he has done nothing wrong and is determined to clear his name. He said: "I was acting in the FA's best interests and following accepted business practice... the process followed to remove me was unconstitutional. The full FA council is the only body that has the right to remove the chairman."

Hero of the hour Barton does a mighty fine job

Michael Walker on why the full-back home fans jeer is tolerated by Ruud Gullit

THE Manic Street Preschers played in Newcastle last week and during a comically drab afternoon at St James' Park it was hard not to think that the angry Welshman had composed If You Tolerate This Then Your Children Will Be Next, specifically with this game in mind. This match was so bad Warren Barton was named man of it.

Then again, Warren Dean Barton is a peculiar case. Bought by Kevin Keegan 3 1/2 seasons ago for the still astonishing sum of £4.5 million, Barton has gone from being a coveted Wimbledon right-back to a laughed-at Newcastle left-back. So enthusiastic are the ironic cheers from home fans every time Barton weighs in with even a milligram of skill, it has become embarrassing.

If you tolerate that then you are either very well paid or have no options. Both probably refer to Barton, who has seen Keegan and Kenny Dalglish depart and who is now prospering under Ruud Gullit, to the extent that Gullit said after the game: "Every club needs a Warren Barton."

It would have been difficult for Gullit to keep a straight face while saying something like that, and he didn't. Gullit admitted Barton "has no left foot" but justified his inclusion on that side of the defence because "he holds good positions" and his inclusion in the team because Barton "is important in the locker-room. He is a good character, good for the atmosphere. He does little jobs like making sure everybody pays their fines. He's our Sheriff of Nottingham."

In that case Barton should ensure Andreas Andersson pays heavily. It would be interesting to hear what Andersson's contribution to team morale is. Maybe he brings shampoo and conditioner. He certainly brings nothing to a football pitch, except the expletives that follow him from the terraces. To call Andersson a big girl's blouse would be to invite writs from big girls everywhere — not to mention their blouses.

Alan Shearer, who came on for the last 35 minutes, stares at the Swede as if the two were in a bad marriage. They are. Yet Gullit continues to pick Andersson, and could point to him having a foot in Newcastle's goal. This was only partly true. Andersson's intended pass was intercepted and the loose ball was stroked in by Stephen Glass after 66 minutes.

That was enough to beat a hugely disappointing Leicester City. When addressing the press afterwards, Martin O'Neill stared through them as though reporting back from some grisly ambush in a Vietnam jungle. "I am sorry," he said, shell-shocked. "We were poor, we had no energy. Newcastle deserved to win."

O'Neill attributed Leicester's lethargy to Neil Lennon and Muzzy Izet suffering from flu. Both played, however, a sign of O'Neill's resources. Another flu victim, Duncan Ferguson, did not. But the records will show he was not missed. And the reason? "Warren Barton, centre partin' la la la la la."

Newcastle United 1 Leicester 0



Double delight
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runs up his
career best
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The Guardian Sport

Monday December 21 1998 www.football.guardian.co.uk

Grimandi sent off as Leeds are sent packing

Premiership: Arsenal 3 Leeds United 1

Arsenal back with big guns blazing

David Lacey sees the champions hold their advantage in a spiteful encounter

BY THE new year Arsenal's latest challenge for the championship may be something more than a muffled boom from distant cannons. Yesterday they were content to rediscover the art of holding leads by beating Leeds in a match not short of flying shrapnel.

Dennis Bergkamp scored one goal and created two others as David O'Leary's first return to Highbury as a manager saw his lively, confident team defeated, Arsenal's first league victory in six games. Had Leeds taken chances at crucial moments, Arsenal, who a week earlier had lost 3-2 at Aston Villa after going 2-0 up, might have had to work even harder for the victory which has brought them to within four points of the leading pair.

Match stats

	Ars	Leeds
Possession	53%	47%
Attempts on target	3	1
Attempts off target	7	11
Corners	5	2
Fouls	13	12
Offsides	2	4
Bookings	2	3
Sendings-off	1	0

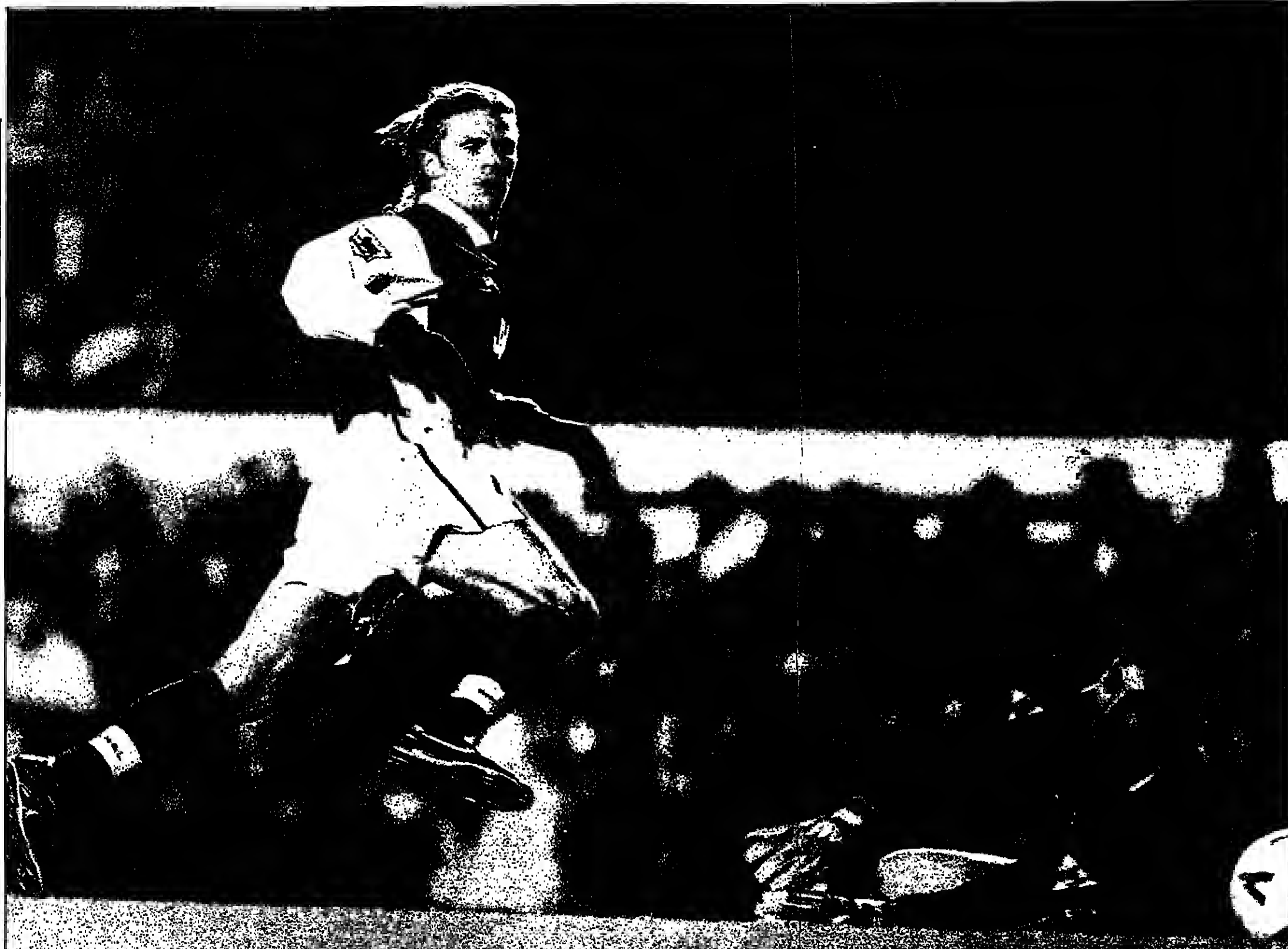
Arsenal are scoring goals again, eight of them in three matches if one counts the 3-1 victory over Panathinaikos which added a defiant postscript to their disappointing Champions League campaign. But other, less attractive habits, still dog their football and yesterday Gilles Grimandi became the fifth Arsenal player to be sent off this season.

The French defender, who had only come off the bench in the 72nd minute, was dismissed by Paul Durkin in the 85th for a mild head-butt on Alan Smith, the 18-year-old Leeds striker who had just replaced Danny Granville. Mild or not, a butt is a butt and Grimandi had to go.

The Arsenal manager, Arsène Wenger, claimed Grimandi had been fouled two or three times. "The guy stamped on him," he said. "Grimandi made a head movement towards him but didn't touch him." Nevertheless, television proved contact had been made.

Certainly Smith pushed the Arsenal player to the ground but Grimandi still over-reacted and, coming less than a week after Patrick Vieira was fined £20,000 by the Football Association for an obscene gesture to the crowd at Hillsborough, was hardly a masterpiece of timing.

After the final whistle Emmanuel Petit angrily brushed aside proffered handshakes



Guiding force... Emmanuel Petit, Arsenal's French midfielder, strikes home his team's third at Highbury in an action replay of the final goal of last summer's World Cup final

PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY M. PIERCE

because he felt Lee Bowyer had elbowed him in the face in the closing seconds. "Bowyer is great at upsetting people," said Wenger but added that this was because he was a good player. Last season Petit was sent off for pushing Durkin during a game against Villa.

Controversy aside, the match was fast, open and watchable as the teams vied to see who could produce the quickest and most penetrating counter-attacks. Initially Leeds had the edge for pace

but Arsenal won because their final passes were better judged and their finishing was sharper.

His squad weakened by several casualties, including Lucas Radebe and David Batty, O'Leary opted for three centre-backs flanked by Gunnar Halle and Ian Harte, relying on Hopkin, Bowyer and Granville to counter the renewed partnership of Vieira and Petit in Arsenal's midfield. For a time the pattern promised to bear fruit but once Leeds fell behind they found it difficult

to get players forward in support of Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink and Harry Kewell.

All might have been different had Hopkin accepted the simplest of chances midway through the first half. Bowyer, having dispossessed Bergkamp, Hopkin started a move which saw Bowyer release Hasselbaink on the left. The Dutchman's cross was low and true but Hopkin, with only Alex Manninger, playing in place of the injured David Seaman, to beat, sidefooted wide from barely three yards.

Shortly before the half-hour Leeds learned the cost of that miss. A lob from Petit was headed forward by Nicolas Anelka and Bergkamp calmly beat Nigel Martyn to score his third goal in two matches.

Leeds were entitled to feel a little hard done by since Anelka had been in an offside position when Petit played the ball and should have been pulled up the moment he came into the movement.

At all events Arsenal were playing the sort of football which won them the Double

last season, with Bergkamp in full flow, Marc Overmars showing much of his old sharpness and Petit and Vieira commanding the game from box to box. Ten minutes before half-time Petit darted behind the Leeds defence to meet a Bergkamp chip with a volley that went just wide.

Seven minutes into the second half Bergkamp's precise square pass through a cluster of defenders found Vieira showing a superb touch to gain possession and stride past the last challenge

before driving Arsenal further ahead. In the opening minutes of the half Bowyer had put a free header wide.

"You've got to take your chances," said O'Leary and in the 68th minute Hasselbaink did so in resounding fashion. Bowyer's cross rebounded off Kewell's heel as he challenged Martin Keown and the power and speed of Hasselbaink's shot inside the right-hand post beat Manninger.

Leeds saw a gleam of hope but Arsenal were creating chances almost at will and

with eight minutes left, Nelson Vivas having dispossessed Kewell, Bergkamp's pass sent in Petit for a shot in off a post which recalled his late goal for France in the World Cup final.

Arsenal might not have beaten Brazil but at least Wenger was persuaded to revise his annual dismissal of their title chances from doubtful to maybe. But his defence is still being exposed. The difference yesterday was that Leeds did not have a Dico Duhlin to take advantage.

Martin Thorpe sees a buoyant Middlesbrough confirm their recent revival and add to Alex Ferguson's woes with a 3-2 win at Old Trafford

Robson offers United a window to the future

Half measures

How the United and Middlesbrough centre-halfs compare

	Neville	Pallister
Defending		
Tackles attempted	1	2
Success rate	100%	100%
Clearances, blocks	2	14
Passing		
Passes attempted	68	24
Success rate	96%	96%
Goal attempts	0	0
On target	0	0
Off target	0	0
Discipline		
Fouls committed	1	1
Cards (yellow - red)	0-0	0-0

AFEW weeks ago Manchester United fans were worrying that the club would rue the day they released the man regarded as Alex Ferguson's natural successor.

On Saturday, with Brian Kidd at Blackburn and Ferguson absent because of a family bereavement, supporters and directors alike were offered a timely glimpse of what the future might look like without the man behind the club's colossal successes. As United went 3-0 down at home after 59 minutes, it was a chilling vision.

However, Middlesbrough's first win at Old Trafford since 1930 also offered an alternative glimpse of a post-Ferguson United. So impressive are Boro now that it becomes easier by the day to see Bryan Robson returning to manage the club he served with injury-prone distinction for 13 years.

Eleven Premiership games unbeaten have lifted Boro to

fourth. United, meanwhile, have won only one of their last nine Premiership games, last kept a clean sheet on November 8 and have conceded 28 goals — compared to 27 in all league games last season.

Statistics like these point to one area, and sure enough collective defensive failings once again cost United the chance to go top of the table. Jaap Stam was missing injured, but even with him the fundamental problem remains.

The rock-solid years of telepathic understanding between Steve Bruce and Gary Pallister have been replaced by the suicidal uncertainty of a fluctuating central defensive partnership comprising Stam and A. N. Other. Ferguson must surely settle on a central pair and give them time to develop an understanding, or buy someone better to partner Stam.

Pallister's dominant performance on his first return to Old Trafford since joining

Boro in the summer only reinforced the view that he was sold a year too soon.

The person who adds to United's defensive uncertainty is the goalkeeper. Someone, somewhere seems to have made a subtle switch, for the man between the United sticks is surely not Peter Schmeichel but a less-talented twin.

The big Dane was once renowned for his presence. Now it is his presents. Take Boro's first goal: when Gary Neville carelessly waved through the impressive Dean Gordon's cross, Schmeichel fatally stayed on his line.

Match stats

	ManU	Boro
Possession	56%	44%
Attempts on target	7	8
Attempts off target	8	8
Corners	14	3
Fouls	11	9
Offsides	0	6
Bookings	1	1

allowing Brian Deane to set up Hamilton Ricard to score.

Boro's football did not offer much fantasy, especially without the suspended Paul Gascoigne. Basically they played simple balls up to Ricard and Deane, and allowed the big but mobile pair to create havoc on the ground and in the air.

The team is hard-working, strong, experienced, well-organised and, given their recent run, increasingly confident. Robson rated his performance the best in his 4½ years in charge.

Goal No. 2 followed a poor headed clearance by the central defender Ronnie Johnson which the unmarked Gordon pounced on an awful pass by Johnson and fed Deane, who shrugged off a powder-puff challenge from Phil Neville to score.

The man in charge of United, Jim Ryan, was a few weeks ago the reserve-team

coach. Now here he stood in his first senior game as No. 1, eager to show why he should be made Kidd's successor, and they were 3-0 down.

To United's credit, they did storm back. Nicky Butt scored within three minutes with a header, then on 89 minutes the substitute Paul Scholes added another after finishing off a move he began.

Coming into this game United had suffered four bad draws in a row — five if you count being handed Inter-nazionale in the Champions League quarter-finals. But they would have settled for another one now.

However, Andy Cole missed a sitter and the three-goal deficit proved too much. As a result United lost their unbeaten home record and Bernie Slavin will today lose his trousers after the former Boro striker promised to bare all in a local shop window if the team won. Fergie probably wishes he could get to the bottom of things so easily.



Danish blue... a deflated Peter Schmeichel runs Boro's second goal

Television and radio

The weather in Europe

Midday today

010

MediaGuardian

White Christmas

At the close of a year in which the media world was rocked by a series of cocaine scandals, **Rory Carroll** reveals the fraught life of Charlie's friends. Even Blue Peter was snared...

It is not polite, but look at the state of the media world. You can see it. The strident back to the future. The strident return to the conversation. Ideas tumbled out with total confidence, eyes alight. Next morning they might be red. Ask why and a twinkle may be the only reply.

Cocaine use is a popular admission, though by all accounts it is a popular habit. Everybody's doing it or knows colleagues who are. Without it, the media world would be a different place. It is the lifeblood of the industry, the fuel that keeps it burning. But this season's festive snorters have added reason to double-check the toilet door is locked, for this has been the year of cocaine bled into the open. What the industry puts up its nose has become news.

But this season's festive snorters have added reason to double-check the toilet door is locked, for this has been the year of cocaine bled into the open. What the industry puts up its nose has become news.

Flip back the calendar. January: French journalists, writers and TV producers were ousted as massive cocaine scandals rocked the industry. The animated return to the conversation. Ideas tumbled out with total confidence, eyes alight. Next morning they might be red. Ask why and a twinkle may be the only reply.

October: Richard Bacon, 22, didn't listen to his father who passed on a warning from a journalist friend about London's cocaine scene. The Blue Peter presenter snorted in the street and in a club during a 12-hour binge. He was spotted and a little birdie flattered to the News of the World.

A scoop was in motion. Two photographers snapped him leaving Blue Peter's birthday party. Ignoring his companions, Andrew Turner and Caron Keating. Suspicion turned to

Britain's media? It's an important question. Pressure to introduce random drug testing at work has intensified since last month's survey by the Institute of Personnel and Development showed that up to 15 per cent of the workforce may be taking drugs at any one time.

Forensic Science Services, a government agency specialising in drug testing, found that one in 10 workers regularly test positive. Drink and drug abuse is estimated to cost employers £3 billion a year. A media industry crackdown could lead to a catastrophic purge of staff.

Credibility would crumble, for the media's role is to expose the hypocrisy and the patrolling. The media's role is to expose the hypocrisy and the patrolling. The media's role is to expose the hypocrisy and the patrolling.

Richard Bacon (above) was fired from Blue Peter after he was spotted snorting coke



'When you're on it you really believe you're producing stuff but you're not'
— AA Gill (above)

In fact, the cocaine goes further, suggesting employers might even encourage usage. "Media employers know better than to try random testing because so many staff will be caught. Anyway, it boosts productivity. They ought to supply staff with cocaine because then they'll work the way they want to work — quick reflexes, hyper, hyping things up."

Higher salaries help make London the focus. Says Richard Ingram, editor of the *Observer*, "I was first made aware of this phenomenon when I started frequenting the Groucho club in the mid-eighties. I was amazed it was done so openly. No one seemed to be particularly worried there might be a police raid."

Believe the anecdotes, and on suspicion outside the capital is also rife. The comedian Rhonda Cameron isn't joking when she speaks of the Edinburgh Festival as a drink and cocaine binge. Last year police raided the gent at the George Hotel.

After-effects include fatigue and depression, not ameliorated by fried nasal membranes. Accidentally blowing out the structure separating the nostrils is also dispiriting. Large doses can lead to extreme agitation, anxiety, paranoia and hallucinations.

James Hewitt, the former lover of Diana, Princess of Wales, is not easy to pin down. Before this interview took place, there were meetings, meetings and meetings. He would be paid? (No.) He would be paid? (No.) He would be paid? (No.)

When, finally, he came to the door of his overbearing flat in South Kensington, he was asked to wait. But this was only to be an introduction to a man who might have expected some sort of a surprise. A suit, if not full army uniform. But there he was, clearly-eyed and topless.

He said that, in his arrangements (the relationship began in 1987 and had "fizzled out" by 1992), he and Diana "were very clever" (apart from the odd outing to San Lorenzo, they met mainly at Kensington Palace), but they weren't clever enough. They were followed, he said, by the Hackett man in the *Sunday Express*, photographed. "The authorities knew about it, but they didn't want to know."

Diana's death has altered the images of others around her. Prince Charles is now the career blazer. But Hewitt, who remains a free man, has out of the army six years ago not because he failed the exams to be a major, but because he slept with a woman, forever the bastard.

The Sabine Durrant Interview



PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBIN PRICE

James Hewitt Unhappily ever after

He wishes he'd died in the Gulf War and cries if he sees the photographs of Diana and himself together. Now he's fighting for the return of her stolen love letters — and he won't give up

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One million rounds of bullets tipped with uranium were fired during the Gulf war. They slice through tanks.

150 من الامل

MediaGuardian

On the press

Roy Greenslade



Spied in the papers

Sure, the bombardment of Iraq and the downfall of Saddam Hussein were the big news of the week. But there is nothing like a story about one of the most powerful men in the world being spied on by the British press. So there was plenty of space devoted to the saga of the editor said to have been on MI6 payroll.

The story first emerged in an interview with the former MI6 officer Richard Tomlinson, in the 50,000-crested Sunday Express on October 11. In an article about the role of the secret service in helping British companies win business abroad, there was a throwaway remark about "one national newspaper editor" having been "on a paid MI6 agent". Even so, this astonishing allegation might never have gained wider audience but for the Times's editor, John Birt, who gave the story to the Sunday Express. Birt, who had broken the story, was then asked to say whether Tomlinson had named the editor. He refused to say who the editor was, but he did say that community of journalists who specialise in spies and spooks, were alerted to the fact that there might be a genuine story.

First into the fray was the Times's defence editor, Michael Evans, with a front page piece on December 13, ostensibly about Tomlinson's alleged breach of the Official Secrets Act. The prominent sub-heading gave away the paper's real reason for publishing "National newspaper editor linked to allegations". Given that there are only 18 editors, it was guaranteed to start a witch-hunt. Discouraging tabloid editors, it left them in a predicament. Initially, at least two reporters and one editor believed the culprit was the Times's Peter Stothard. The editor was then by publishing the story, which had been leaked from himself. By Monday the whippersnappers were suddenly certain of their man, regardless of whether Tomlinson

did or did not tell them and ignoring whether he was or was not being spied on. How, though, could his name be published, given the information and the existence of the law of libel?

With politicians beginning to take an interest, it didn't take a minute for the most experienced hacks to find a ploy. Had not Anthony Blunt been exposed as a spy 19 years ago when an MP, prompted by a journalist, asked a question about the Communists under the coat of Parliamentary privilege? By chance two Labour MPs, unaware of each other's interest, were both intrigued by the Tomlinson tale. George Galloway decided to put down an early day motion, but Brian Sedgmore got in first, by inserting the allegation about Tomlinson in a speech during a Wednesday morning debate about the Freedom of Information Act.

One reporter was in the press gallery, the Press Association's Jackie Storer, and that was enough. After a night's doze while she made some checks, Storer's first newspaper column at lunchtime, Lawson became the target.

As the week's big news and the papers gave them the prominence, there is nothing like a story about one of the most powerful men in the world being spied on by the British press. So there was plenty of space devoted to the saga of the editor said to have been on MI6 payroll.



Free agent? Dominic Lawson

Immediately seized on the credibility of two articles published in the Spectator when Lawson was editor between 1990 and 1996.

Bylined "Kenneth Roberts, who works for the UN forces in Bosnia", both papers claimed he was, in fact, an MI6 officer. Much more preposterous was an Express front page piece that began by pointing out that Princess Diana and went on to talk about Tomlinson's fantastical theories about MI6 being implicated in Diana's death. Lawson's rapid rebuttal, saying "I am not and never have been an agent either paid or unpaid of MI6 or any other government agency", made no difference to the speculation. Nor, indeed, did an unprecedented Foreign Office denial.

Again, it was the Times that made the running. Having published a leading article headlined "Agent Tomlinson", which led on MPs to investigate the claims, it followed the next day with a piece claiming Lawson would face "prosecuted parliamentary scrutiny". This was a week's headlines come down to this. The man who started it all now says he has no proof. What a farce.

could only serve to place Lawson under yet greater suspicion, though no new evidence had come to light.

On Saturday, the Times revealed that his inquiries into the mysterious Kenneth Roberts had been thwarted by the threat of a D-thaw notice. They had evidently discovered the man's real name, supposedly through investigations of the book *Jedgar* at the Spectator, but could not publish it.

Throughout the week Lawson kept his counsel but he finally replied to his critics in yesterday's Sunday Telegraph. Though light-hearted in tone, his underlying anger was evident. He agreed, on reflection, that the Times might be right in saying that Roberts was, after all, an MI6 agent, though he hadn't realised at the time.

But he added triumphantly that he recalled asking "Roberts" if he had written pseudonymously for any other publication. Yes, he replied, the Times.

He concluded by pointing out his central difficulty, that "it is impossible to prove a negative". A denial, in such circumstances, is accepted as such. But he underlined his previous one with another: "I have never worked for the intelligence services. The only free agent I could ever be is a free one."

Whether this will do the trick is uncertain. In the Observer, former Guardian editor Peter Preston pointed out that Lawson may not be believed until "an independent inquiry" has examined the case. Like many journalists at the Spectator, he cannot forgive Lawson for the Spectator story that led to the resignation of Richard Gott, the Guardian's respected literary editor. Soviet double agent Oleg Gordievsky alleged in an interview that Gott was an "agent of influence" paid by the KGB.

Though Gott disputed the substantive allegations, he did admit having accepted a bribe paid for by the Russians without the editor's knowledge. For this reason he resigned. Lawson has always maintained that Gordievsky was the truth.

Apart from the interview itself, his timing was crucial. — at a time when the Guardian was fighting a battle with Tory minister Jonathan Aitken over payment for his stay in the Ritz hotel — and was obviously not underlining its credibility.

That aside, it doesn't prove Lawson was a spy. It was a typical piece of vicious innuendo, journalistic mischief for which he, like many other editors, is renowned. Perhaps the whole affair was put into perspective in yesterday's Sunday Times in an article headlined "MI6 used Spectator as cover story". Way down the story, after further innuendo, the writers noted: "It is understood that Tomlinson has never claimed to have any hard proof that Lawson was a paid agent. It is understood that he now accepts that the claim was 'hearsay' and based on conversations with colleagues."

As the new controller of BBC2, Jane Root is the latest powerful female to bring a distinctly unmasculine feel to Auntie's executive bureaucracy. Maggie Brown traces her rise

Women take root

The champagne flowed on Thursday as an impromptu luncheon party began in Jane Root's office. At 9.30pm the night before, the hard-working, deceptively informal woman had been called to Sir John Birt's office, and told by him he was to be controller of BBC2. She was to be the sort of job you dream about, rather than expect, he said modestly. And, also, a little bit of history has been made. Whatever BBC executives say about her gender not coming into it, which it didn't, it does nevertheless matter that she is a woman and the first to control one of the BBC's major channels.

For all its equality targets, the corporation has been struggling to allow women into the best creative jobs. And the gender and personality of the controller also matter to viewers, too. Those executives and producers lower down the line, who actually make the programmes, are all affected by the attitudes and outlook of the controller.

There is something more going on here. Root is the latest in a line of powerful female executives who are giving a distinctly unmasculine feel to parts of the behemoth that is the BBC's executive bureaucracy. Jenny Abramsky has recently been appointed director of radio after a time in the wilderness of continuous news. Jane Bennett, director of production, succeeded Alan Yentob, while Sue Frier is director of marketing and communications.

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So, attending her party were the senior executives trying to persuade her to join the BBC, only to quit as direct-

Arts

If Zaha can do this for Cincinnati, why don't we get her to save the South Bank?



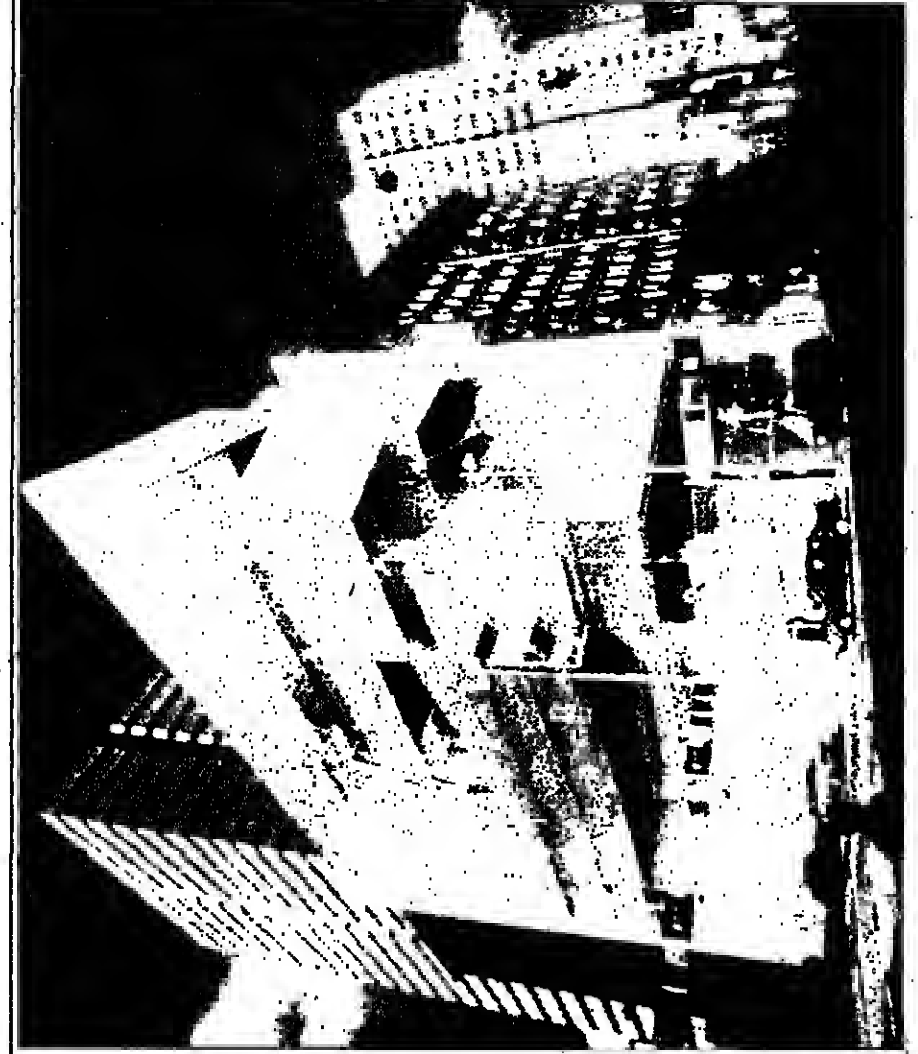
Jonathan Glancey on an architectural superstar

She's a pussy cat really, Zaha Hadid. Well, she was last week at the Hayward Gallery on London's South Bank, putting and being as warm and as funny as this brilliant architect can be to anyone who takes her as seriously as she is taken virtually everywhere — everywhere that is, outside her adopted country, Britain.

Hadid had every right to feel pleased last week. Surrounded by supporters, she presented seductive plans, models and computer-generated walk-throughs of her first major building, the Contemporary Arts Centre, Cincinnati. This seductive design (a true snip at \$27.5 million) goes on site next autumn and is due to open two years later.

This is good news and makes up for the extraordinarily shabby way in which Hadid has been treated at home. A woman and a feisty one at that, formidably intelligent, witty, stylish and forthright, she is an architect who has always had just about everything going against her. Out of that everything and understanding, she has designed a building that is more than a series of boxes into which you just drop art objects. She has created spaces that heighten our engagement with art — spaces that let energy flow back and forth between the city and the museum, spaces that give artists something to push their work.

It was difficult to listen to these words, however, and to look at Hadid's models and drawings in the concrete confines of the Hayward Gallery. Why? Because, the Hayward should have known better. The anniversary of this year is under threat of demolition. If it goes, Hadid's Cincinnati project will be the phoenix rising from its rubble.



Were — a crystal tide that would have lapped over the existing buildings and offered visitors the climate of Bordeaux most of the year round. The strategy announced last week from the South Bank Centre made no mention of the sort of architecture or standards of design it aspired to or would promote. And, yet, here was one of the most inspiring architects of our times presenting a brilliant new arts museum for Cincinnati, Ohio, in the new year and the South Bank Centre, under its new chairman, Elliott Bernard, a property developer, promised to hold competitions for the design of new buildings on the site.

This may not be the right thing to do. The existing concrete buildings, still derided by those who refuse to look at them dispassionately, have very slowly been working their way into the affection of artists and the public. The Hayward Gallery (LCC/GLC Architects department), in particular, was as ranked in its day as Hadid's design for Cincinnati. Now, anyone who doesn't like the old Southbank, becoming less and less, will see the point in a building that has been brought to life by excellent exhibitions and intelligent curation.

Those with unflinchingly long memories will recall that even the extension of the National Gallery was an inglorious moment, to have been almost as an afterthought on top of a new office block promoted by Nigel Brookes and Trafalgar House. That was the eighties, when too many desperate people, in the autumn of 2001, were blinded by the money boys. Better whom should have known better. The sort of major urban upheaval that will almost inevitably drag on past its public tolerance date.

There is, of course, the Jubilee Gardens site to build on new and for any lower standard or hope aim for any better occasion than this. The South Bank Centre, Cincinnati. We really mustn't let it be a public tolerance date.

Hadid's seductive design for the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio, is a masterpiece of architectural imagination. It is a building that will not only be a masterpiece of architecture, but also a masterpiece of urban planning. It is a building that will not only be a masterpiece of architecture, but also a masterpiece of urban planning.

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Blair and not told for two y

David Henck, Ewen MacArthur and Saurman Milne

Locke

in Black and Mark Train in New York

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Women

The age of dissent

Michele Hanson

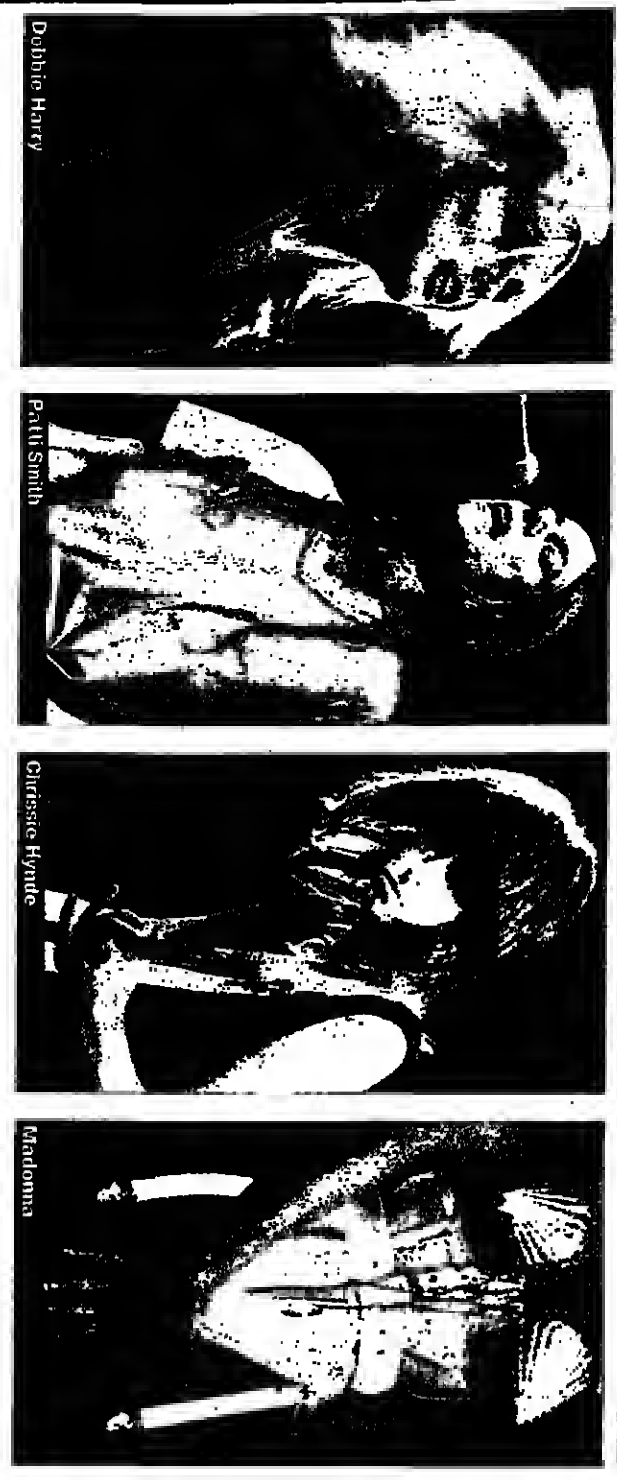


Glad tidings

Last Christmas, I spent Christmas in London. I can't tell you how much I enjoyed it. I was in a lovely house, and I was with people I love. I was in a lovely house, and I was with people I love. I was in a lovely house, and I was with people I love.

Rock 'n' role

Ave singers the new feminist icons? Lucy O'Brien reports



In the US, they call it the Third Wave — a new feminism for a new generation. It is fuelled by popular culture in general and music in particular, and its icons are women with the right attitude, the right looks and a microphone.

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Imagine Mary had suffered post-natal depression after giving birth to Jesus. Would there have been no room at the mother and baby unit?

Sam Hart reveals the crisis in care for new mothers

Blue for a boy, blue for a girl

Blue for a boy, blue for a girl

such severe cases should be admitted to specialist units, such as the Queen's Medical Centre in Nottingham. However, only five such units exist in Britain — and only 25 per cent of the country has access to them.